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The Relationship between Music  
and the Supernatural  
as that is portrayed in  
Early Medieval Irish literature

by

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## Abstract

This thesis is an essay in the phenomenology of religion; it is not primarily a study of the literature or history of early Ireland. This thesis investigates the content and meaning of the early Irish people's language and expression as it relates to music. The culture being investigated is that of early medieval Ireland, up to and including the twelfth century. The focus of the thesis is on a Collection of music references extracted by this author from selected literature; the Collection itself is presented here as an independent Appendix volume to the main body of the thesis. The specific literature selected for this thesis is found in eight major categories of Old and Middle Irish texts: 1) tales from the Mythological Cycle; 2) Dindshenchas (Place-lore poems); 3) the tales and sagas from the Ulster Cycle; 4) the tales from the Cycles of the Kings literature; 5) the Immrama ("Voyage") literature; 6) tales from the Acallam na Senorach; 7) early Irish poetry; and 8) the early Irish saints' Lives.

This thesis is divided into five major chapters--Performers, Instruments, Effects, Places, and Times. The Performers chapter examines the "supernatural" performers, the mundane performers, and those performers portrayed with some degree of Otherworld influence(s). The Instruments chapter discusses the various instruments portrayed in this literature, as well as how they might relate to the Otherworld. The Effects chapter examines all of the

various effects of music mentioned in the references from the Collection, and discusses how they relate to the "supernatural". The Places and Times chapters discuss the "supernatural", liminal, and mundane places and times regarding music, as referred to in the references from the Collection. Comparative material is used from other world cultures, in each chapter, for illustratory purposes only.

Arguing that music is a means by which the early Irish people test their world and register its realities, this thesis discovers in this select literature on music, an unbroken continuity between the otherworldly and the mundane, experienced and expressed through early Irish music, and this is common to both overtly primal and overtly Christian contexts.



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"Music as a Means of Testing the World (and the  
Otherworld) and Registering its Realities":  
in a select body of literature  
from early and medieval Ireland

1) This thesis is an essay in the phenomenology of religion. It is not primarily a study of the literature or history of early Ireland. Instead, it is an exercise in religious studies and/or the science of religion. It neither involves nor requires a particular faith stance or a theology of revealed truths. This thesis investigates the content and meaning of a particular people's religious language, expression and behaviour, as it relates to music. In this case, the culture being investigated is early medieval Ireland, up to and including the twelfth century. The literature of this particular era has been analysed and read through for any and all references to music. The Appendix to this thesis is a major body of original seminal research, in the form of a Reference Collection of music references from this literature of early medieval Ireland.

2) The overall focus of this thesis is on music--but, it must be added, not on music itself, as performed--as this is lost to us inevitably. Thus, this is not a musicology or a music history thesis. Instead, it will primarily examine what the early Irish seem to say or imply about music as their surviving literature reveals. This analysis will examine, in whatever limited manner we are able in the late twentieth century, how music is thought to represent the people's experience and vision of reality, especially its sacred dimensions or Otherworldly aspects. In this sense, music

may be viewed as a way in which the early Irish comment on, or "register", their reality. The term "Otherworld" is used here to mean what it basically implies---i.e., "not of this world", something transcendent, beyond one's ordinary everyday, mundane experience. Much experience is often termed "otherworldly". The mysterious, sacred dimension of a people's culture and experience are most often described in terms of their religious beliefs and rituals, but various art forms can also be used to illustrate this --including music. It appears that many such experiences are of a non-verbal nature, and music can serve as a type of communicative or expressive medium, and it is thus widely regarded in the literature under review.

Here then we share the assumption of the early Irish that music does give access to reality in both everyday, mundane and otherworldly contexts. The various music references that one encounters while reading through this literature of the early medieval Irish era describe a great range in the mention and use of music in everyday situations--at banquets, fairs and festivals, at monasteries with the singing of hymns and psalms, or while working in the fields, for example. These references also portray a broad range of the use of music in what might be described as situations involving some kind of an Otherworldly dimension--where mysterious music is described as being heard at a saint's birth or death, descriptions of the music of angels in Heaven, or of the music of the sidhe at Samhain time, for example. Clearly, music is presented in a ~~wide range of~~ contexts in early Irish society, both

in everyday, mundane life and in a more Otherworldly context.

The accomplished Northern Irish playwright Stewart Parker in a lecture stated that "play is how we test the world and register its realities. Play is how we experiment, imagine, invent, and move forward. Play is above all how we enjoy the earth and celebrate our lives upon it." He further adds:

It is no accident of etymology that this fundamental... self-sufficient force shaping the very evolution of human society, should share its name with those works of fiction which are presented by actors before an audience --the stage play, the screenplay, the radio and television play--these are merely particular and local forms of the play-force, consciously shaped, fashioned by human imagination, and usage into a highly sophisticated kind of game, the rules of which have remained surprisingly constant for well over two thousand years. (1)

And--don't forget the sound track, he may well have added. Music is also a type of creative play, in which humans have always experimented with, imagined, invented reality, and moved forward. Professor J.P. Mackey states, in Power and Christian Ethics:

For such a basic way of testing the world, registering its realities, and recreating these, must be as old as human imagination at least; and this even in its more fictive as distinct from its more natural forms, if such a distinction can be sustained. And it is religious as early, and as late, as the realities thus registered are thought to be ultimate or absolute, or at least a matter of life and death for humans, if not of being and non-being for all. Religions always place the ritual drama at the centre of their efforts to test the world and to register its realities. The great seasonal festivals of awakening, burgeoning, ripening, dying, which measure each and every year that measures life, were designed to seek out and to celebrate... Seeking to test the world in depth and to register the deepest sources of being and life...(2)

Music, too, is most often present at religious rituals in some form and in early Irish society, was certainly a key part of the great seasonal festivals that mark the annual calendar year. In such an instance, it might be stated that music serves as a type of expressive language for the people. The question is: How does music "register reality"? Nearly everyone agrees that music somehow does affect the individual listener, especially regarding the emotions, but musicians, philosophers and musicologists are divided as to how exactly this occurs.

Musicologist Deryck Cooke, in his important landmark work The Language of Music, discusses the issue of how music is an investigative and expressive language. In this work, Cooke determines to make a case that music is a language capable of expressing certain very definite emotions. He does not believe that this concept is a mere "romantic aberration", but instead, he claims it has been the unconscious assumption of composers for at least the past five centuries, if not even earlier. His study is confined to the Western European Harmonic period, and to music written in a specific key, as opposed to modern atonal music. In presenting his case, Cooke begins by discussing the various means of expression available to a composer, the various procedures in the dimensions of time, pitch, and volume, and attempts to look at what emotional effects these procedures can produce. More specifically, he tries to pinpoint the inherent emotional characters of the various pitch intervals of the major, minor, and chromatic scales and of certain basic melodic patterns which have

been used throughout our music history. He calls these patterns a music "vocabulary". (3)

Cooke examines the vexing question of exactly how musical notes relate to each other, and how they create tensional relationships between themselves. These tensional relationships between various pitches are the essence of how the language of music gets conveyed to the listener, he asserts. Music naturally has its own technical laws, concerned with the organization of notes into coherent forms, but considered as expression, it has three separate aspects--form, tone-painting/mood-colouring, and the creation of an emotional statement. These characteristics are related to the arts of architecture, drama, painting, and poetry; but music especially functions in a similar manner to poetry as it also creates a unified, coherent form out of conflicting emotions.

Cooke believes that a language of music is built out of the tensions between notes, set up through time, pitch, and volume, "fine-tuned" by the composer and/or performer adding what he calls the "characterizing agents" of tone colour, which affects mood, and the texture of the music (i.e., how it is harmonized, etc.) Thus, depending on exactly how all of these various attributes are combined, different emotional subtleties are created. He also discusses the natural phenomenon known as the Harmonic Series, stating that "in nature itself, a single note sets up a harmony of its own..." (4) The Triad, (1-3-5 pattern) was to become the basis of our harmony, based on the natural Harmonic Series. The introduction of the Major third interval, as part of this Triad,



was revolutionary in music history, as it completely changed the emotional ambience of the modes then in use. In 1322, Pope John XXII was so angered by this "corrupting" sound, that he issued a decree to forbid its use, as he felt it "secularized" the ecclesiastical modes, making it difficult to distinguish between them. The Major third was later used in troubadour songs, and is generally thought to be "happy" or "joyful" to the listener, even to this day. The Major third and the 1-3-5 Triad are still used in many popular songs down to the present day, conveying a feeling of pleasure and joy. Perhaps this issue about the Major third might give us pause to reconsider and possibly validate Stewart Parker's concept of "play", as mentioned previously. This ability on the part of music, to experiment, imagine, invent, and move forward, does involve an aspect of what might be termed divine creative play.

Cooke astutely notes that with the introduction of the use of accidentals--flats, naturals, and sharps--to "correct" an inherent flaw in the natural harmonic series, there came far-reaching implications. As is well known, the interval of the diminished fifth sounds "incomplete" and "unresolved" to the ear. Even the ancient Greeks acknowledged this. In medieval times, the first accidental, B-flat, was introduced to help correct this situation, as this diminished fifth interval, also called the Tritone, was considered to have a "demonic" effect on listeners. Cooke says that "clearly, our tonal system is the product of Western Europe's individual reaction to the 'flaw' in the natural Harmonic Series:

the key-system corrects it." (5) The Greeks called this flaw the "Pythagorean Comma". As a result, the old modes were altered, with the Greek Lydian mode, e.g., becoming what we now call the "key of F-major". Cooke then describes specific notes in our tonal system, and how these pitches tend to behave in our system of harmony, an example being the previously mentioned Major third as consistently labelled as sounding "joyful" and "stable" in its effect throughout the centuries, by different composers. The key of D-Major is often thought of as being more light-hearted and happy, with the familiar Christmas carol "Joy To The World" written in this particular key, perhaps because of an awareness of this quality of D-Major on the part of the composer.

Contrast this with the minor sixth, which has consistently come to mean "acute anguish", although harmonically it is more unstable than the Major third in its effects. Many composers and performers have used this interval in funeral pieces, for example. The minor sixth sounds, to nearly everyone that hears it, as though it "wants" to "resolve" itself into a happier, more stable sound. In music theory, the minor sixth usually "resolves" down to the Dominant, the fifth--a much "happier" result in its effect on the ear.

Cooke believes that the differences between various composers' usage of the same tonal tensions is due to their adding "vitalizing agents" of time, volume, and pitch. These invariably determine exactly how a particular phrase will "end up emotionally" to the ears of the listener. Of course, each composer and performer have

their own unique individual styles of using such vitalizing agents. Thus, two composers or performers can fine tune the emotional response of the minor sixth in a particular phrase by using different combinations of pitch, time, and volume. This determines exactly what type of grief or exactly which type of joy the composer or performer wants to convey. He feels that these emotional subtleties are largely what the language of music is all about, and states this comes about by the use of tensional relationships between pitch--the main point to Cooke--and the additional vitalizing agents, of time and volume.

Not only do certain notes express a consistent emotional response in listeners, but specific melodic phrases do as well. Cooke calls this a musical "vocabulary". He then leads us to the question of exactly how these particular phrases illustrate certain feelings, and how they have consistently done so throughout musical history. He gives examples showing how different composers have often not only used the same tendencies to convey an emotion, but often the same identical notes as well. However, he says each composer uses the vitalizing agents of time, pitch, and volume to put his own stamp of individuality onto the phrase in question, creating a very specific subtlety of emotion.

Cooke sees a composer's "inspiration" as an unconscious reshaping of already existing material in his mind; the creative process of making music is an attempt to create an overall form. This form, the final piece of music, is an overall emotionally expressive statement. As a listener, then, we make direct contact

with the mind of a great artist, interpreting his expression of emotion, Cooke states. His critics contend that it is difficult to tell whether this is merely our own subjective states superimposing themselves onto a given piece of music, but Cooke counters by saying that many times the listener will feel as he has never felt before, and sometimes, feelings aroused by music can persist in a listener's mind for days afterwards, indicating to Cooke that it is somehow a new feeling altogether that the listener experiences. Also, he states, often groups of people will be affected in a similar manner to a given piece of music, lending credence to the theory that music is a type of expressive language.

Finally, he briefly mentions the possibility of music conveying spiritual or mystical intuitions, but he believes that if so, it must be through the emotional terms of musical language, but he then adds, "with a metaphysical insight into music, we should undoubtedly experience these terms with a different kind of feeling: they would be revealed as the same, but also something other". (6) Music, he believes, is primarily a language of the emotions, through which we directly experience the fundamental urges that move humanity, without the need of additional ideas, images, words, or pictures. As such, music is "pure", as it conveys emotion directly to us. Perhaps one could also add that Cooke would likely agree that music is a particularly accurate "register of emotional reality"; and, possibly, also a register of spiritual reality as well; it may well be a way of registering the difficult to describe realities of the Otherworld.

All of this means that music may be an investigative and expressive language by working on human emotions. Music may be seen to "test the world and register its realities" to the extent that human emotions themselves can be deemed to be cognitive, i.e., a means of knowing our world. It would take too long a philosophical discourse to prove such a point--namely, that the way we react emotionally to the various aspects of our common world (or to encounters with the "Otherworld") enables us to know a great deal about its prospects and dangers, and hence about its nature and destiny--but we shall see some evidence shortly of the pivotal use of music in the mother's teaching of the neonate to engage in its first attempts to test the world and register its complex, interpersonal reality.

A dangerous art, music can be, and was so recognised by the Church Fathers, Plato, and Tolstoy, for example, all of whom wished to control, limit, and confine the uses of certain music. This might not be at all different from various modern parents' groups trying to ban rock music and its lyrics from their children's ears. All attest to some power--however seemingly mysterious--of music, to reach us at the deepest level, for good or ill. Cooke says the most articulate language of the Unconscious is Music. Music has been termed the "Queen of the Arts", and for good reasons, according to Cooke. He states that music is a report on human experience, much like that of poetry, and it should be analysed as such. The often-quoted phrase of Dryden, "What passion cannot Music raise and quell?" seems to agree with this viewpoint of music.

Thus, music "registers" the reality of human experience of our common reality; it is a commentary made by a particular people or culture. Apparently, the role of music in mother/infant communication can also serve as a universal investigative and expressive language, one that is understood by an infant under six months of age; there seems to exist an "inherent musicality" in the human infant, no matter what the native culture or language is. University of Edinburgh Professor of Psychology, Dr. Colwyn Trevarthen, states in his ground-breaking research on mother/infant play:

We have found that most mothers begin to sing traditional nursery songs and to perform traditional action games or dances with the baby after three months. Remarkably, the temporal or musical form of these "baby songs" and "baby dances" appears to be essentially the same in very different cultures, regardless of their different languages. What the mother is doing is finding for herself an effective part in a performance that is prescribed by the infant's playfulness. She supports an inherent musicality, finding the beat and she varies the rhythm and expression to challenge the infant's interest and anticipation for the rise and fall of initiative in their engagement...Mother's songs are typically made up of simple verses, usually of four lines, lasting 10-15 seconds. They follow a beat interval centered on moderato and ranging from about 750 msec (andante) to about 450 msec (allegro). Lines of the song have regular changes of pitch that raise and lower the expectation of a listener/actor. ...we can see the mother who is singing a baby song outlining for us the three basic structural levels of at least the three macro-functions: she articulates clear phonological components in a singing voice on a regular beat, with pitch lifting or falling at specific points; she composes a verse of simple separate phrases; and she make a whole 'text' with socio-dramatic development building to a climax which the infant is expected to anticipate and meet with excitement and happiness...A song was sung by the mother to her twenty-week-old daughter; then a

minute later she invited the child to 'do it to me' and she held her palm up. The baby looked eagerly at her mother's face, moving fingers on the palm while the mother gently recited the first line. The baby continued moving, the mother watching with a smile. Microanalysis of the videotape showed that in the next ten seconds the infant made small movements of arms and hands that reproduced the action of the game--on the beat! At precisely the right moment, the baby concluded with a vocalization that matched her mother's laugh when the song was first performed. This is proof that the infant had internalized a memory of the whole song, unfolding in time. It confirms other observations of the aptitude of infants under six months for learning to anticipate rhythmic patterns of sound...(7)

So, says Dr. Trevarthen, it appears that the dynamics of a "baby song" can be internally represented in the mind of an infant at this early age. He mentions what he believes is an "inherent musicality" in the baby, and the researchers' fascination with the baby's ability to follow pitch, its loudness or softness, and respond to rhythm. Ironically, and perhaps equally fascinating, these correspond exactly to the three "vitalizing agents" of Cooke --pitch, volume, and time.

Regarding the issue and importance of play, Dr. Trevarthen comments that "all play is metacommunication, in the sense in which Gregory Bateson used this term to describe animal play." (8) It would appear from this research that "baby music" is, like music in general, a type of creative play, in which we experiment, imagine, invent, and move forward.

Cooke, while acknowledging these various points about music, stated that future work in the area of a possible language of music "will probably not be in the area of philosophical discussions of conceptual arguments, or in 'digests' of the 'meanings' of specific

works--rather, since music can only express feelings, it is thought they will probably be in the nature of interpretations of emotional attitudes.". (9) This would, he thought, most likely involve an examination of the "images" used in the music, and an interpretation of their emotional and psychological connotations.

It appears that Cooke was ahead of his time, as very recently, a new branch of the field of Music Theory, called Music Signification, involves looking at the meaning of a piece of music as well as the mechanics of it. Up until the 1960's, most people thought of music as an abstract art that could only be analysed in its own terms. With advances in linguistic theory, music has begun to be looked at in terms of subconscious codes or signifiers, as well as its overall structure. This has brought in new contributors to the field of Music Theory, such as experts in opera, computer analysis, cognitive science, psychology, sociology, and mathematics. Music signification, for example, would study why so few people listening to the soothing music of the well-known popular ABBA song "Fernando" would realise it is actually a tragic song about freedom fighters in South America! How, or why, is it, that the music itself soothes the listener, yet the lyrics speak of treachery and war? This again gets into the complex area of human emotions and the reactions of the listener to music.

The ability of music to "register reality" in an investigative and expressive type of language is also an issue that physicians and medical scientists today are grappling with, in terms of the human body and DNA patterns. The work of Dr. Susumu Ohno, a



geneticist at the Beckman Research Institute of the City of Hope in Duarte, in southern California, centers around the idea that DNA and music might be connected in some inexplicable manner as a type of expressive communication. In order to understand Dr. Ohno's insights, recall that every organism's genes are composed of strands of DNA, which in turn are made up of four so-called nucleotides containing the bases adenine, (A), guanine, (G), cytosine, (C), and thymine, (T), arranged in sequences that are unique for each species. Dr. Ohno then assigned musical notes to these substances--"do" to cytosine (C), "re" and "mi" to adenine, (A), "fa" and "sol" to guanine, (G), and "la" and "ti" to thymine (T). Then, having assigned musical notes to each base, Dr. Ohno chose a particular key and timing, as well as the duration of each note. The result was a melodic composition that was completed and harmonized by his wife, Midori, a musician. When completely transcribed, the scores were then performed by professional musicians on instruments such as the piano or organ, violin, or viola. (10)

Dr. Ohno has notated over fifteen songs of the DNA of a variety of living organisms during the past few years. He finds that the more evolved an organism is, the more complicated is the music. The DNA of a single-cell protozoan, for example, translates into a simple four-note repetition. But the music transcribed from human DNA--for example, from the body's receptor site for insulin--is much more complex. To listeners knowledgeable about classical music, these DNA-based compositions have been taken variously for

the music of Bach, Brahms, Chopin, and other great composers.

"Many persons hearing them for the first time are moved to tears; they cannot believe their bodies, which they believed to be mere collections of chemicals, contain such uplifting, inspiring harmonies--that they are musical", says Dr. Larry Dossey, commenting on Dr. Ohno's ground-breaking research. (11)

Perhaps even more fascinating, is that not only is it possible to make music starting with DNA, one can do the reverse--start with great pieces of music, assign nucleotides to the notes, and end up with a particular type of DNA. Keeping in mind Stewart Parker's comments on how play, (and this writer would add, music as expressive "harmonic play") can help humanity "invent and move forward", recognizing the music latent in DNA may suggest a new way of looking at human evolution. As an expressive language of the body cells, too, music is possibly a type of universal language; in this case, the evolutionary process might be viewed as not only passing on the genes, but also the music of the DNA, from one generation to another. In this sense, one might say that music is the "register" of the reality of DNA, from one human generation to another; music is here clearly a way of testing the world and registering its realities.

One prominent ear specialist has proven that certain frequencies of Gregorian chant actually "charge" the human brain. Again, music can be a way of testing the world, and registering its realities. Dr. Alfred Tomatis conducted his landmark work at a Benedictine monastery in France just after the Second Vatican

Council in the early 1960's, when there was some discussion as to whether the Latin language should be retained for daily worship or whether the vernacular French, which was encouraged by the Council, should be adopted. Dr. Katherine Le Mee, in reporting on Dr. Tomatis' research states:

Also under consideration was whether chanting should be continued or abandoned in favor of other activities thought to be more useful. The final outcome was the elimination of chant from the Divine Office. Before long a change took place in the community. Monks who previously had been able to survive rather well on the customary three or four hours sleep a night became extremely tired and prone to illness. Thinking that too little sleep might be the cause of their malaise, the abbot allowed more, but this did not help. The more the monks slept, the more tired they became. Even a change in diet was attempted--to a meat and potatoes regime, after vegetarianism had been the rule of the community for 700 years--but this too had no positive result. The situation grew worse and worse until February 1967 when Dr. Tomatis was invited back again...when he arrived, he reported "seventy of the ninety monks were slumping in their cells"... Upon examination, he found that the monks were not only tired but their hearing was not as good as it should have been. His solution was to use a device called the Electronic Ear to increase the monks' auditory sensitivity over a period of several months. The Electronic Ear, developed by Tomatis, is a cybernetic device with two channels joined by a gate which gives the patient sounds as normally heard on one side and, on the other side, the same sounds filtered to allow an improved audition, particularly of high frequencies. Changing channels from one side to the other exercises the muscles of the inner ear and makes it possible for the patient to regain auditory acuity and sensitivity. The other aspect of Dr. Tomatis's treatment was to have the daily chanting brought back immediately into the life of the monastery. (emph. mine). Within nine months the monks had experienced an extraordinary improvement, both in their ability to hear and in their general sense of health and well-being. Most were able to return to the way of life that had been normal in their community for hundreds of years...(12)

When interviewed about this research, Dr. Tomatis explained the vital role played by the ear in stimulating the brain's activity;

in particular, it serves to charge the cerebral cortex with electrical potential. A well-tuned ear is able to stimulate the brain, but this is not all. "Modern research identifies two kinds of sounds, known as 'discharge' sounds, which tire and fatigue the listener, and 'charge' sounds, which give energy and health and which have the power, like the Electronic Ear, to re-awaken the hearing and recharge the mind and body with energy. Charge sounds are rich in high frequencies, whereas discharge sounds are of low frequency." (13) It may also be noted at this juncture that ELF waves, (Extremely Low Frequency) are used in warfare, to exhaust enemy populations. Dr. Tomatis, in his book The Conscious Ear, states that putting an oscilloscope to the sounds of Gregorian Chant reveals that it contains all the frequencies of the voice spectrum, roughly 70 to 9,000 hertz, but with a very different envelope curve from that of normal speech. The monks sing in the medium range--that of a baritone--but due to the unity and resonance of the sound, their voices produce rich overtones of higher frequency. It is these higher tones, mainly in the range of 2,000 to 4,000 hertz, that provide the charge to the brain. When the monks referred to earlier were not chanting, says Dr. Le Mee in her book Chant, they were missing their daily dose of energy. It is not difficult to understand the feeling of fatigue that they experienced. (14) The way the monks receive energy through the complex organization of the body and its energy fields, serves to reorganize the energy distribution in all of the body centres. It seems that these higher frequencies, and especially Gregorian

chant frequencies, is literally "good" for the body as well as the spirit.

Perhaps, as Dr. Ohno's research on DNA suggests, the natural world could be viewed as a gigantic symphony, composed of innumerable instruments. In commenting on Dr. Ohno's research, Dr. Larry Dossey states that "Instead of sitting imperiously atop the evolutionary chain, we might see ourselves as simply occupying the "first chair", dependent on our colleagues to flesh out the score and enrich the performance. We might even begin to think of the Absolute not as a blind watchmaker who fashioned a mindless machine, but as the Maestro who wrote the melody and interwove all the harmonies." (15) It is here that we are reminded of the world-view of the early Irish, in that they clearly did not see the Absolute as only a mere blind watchmaker, but, instead, viewed life and the cosmos as having a unity, a meaning to their lives.

This is but a brief selection of theories to explain how music, like play, enables us to test the world and register its realities, as much by operating with and upon these as by "contemplating" them and reacting "subjectively" to them. The selection covers a wide range of theories, not with any intention of complete inventory, but simply to show how integral is music to every level of our common interpersonal engagement in this complex universe--from the physical and chemical level to the most spiritual. Needless to say, it is not suggested that the early Irish anticipated any of these theories of music; indeed no evidence is presented here of their having a theory of music at

all. But it is clear that the texts we present from their pens think of music in connection with the major emotions that dominate and affect human life and well-being (or, ill), and hence, in connection with encounters with the depths and heights of reality. Our interest is focussed particularly upon the depths or heights normally considered sacred or otherworldly, and the ways in which early Irish descriptions of music--its performers, instruments, effects, times and places--imply that such depths and heights can be registered. Practised beliefs that music can do all of this clearly precede, and call for, eventually, theories as to how it is possible.

This writer, then, is not suggesting that the early Irish themselves worked out an explicit theory per se, in the manner of Deryck Cooke, Dr. Trevarthen, or the ancient Greek Pythagoreans, but the way they talk about music in relation to their culture assures us that they knew that music gives access to reality, even at the supernatural heights. It appears that the Collection references imply this. Perhaps certain music, as many have believed throughout the ages, can carry us to the highest heights.

#### The major categories of literature used in the Collection

3) This thesis is confined to the era of early medieval Ireland up to approximately the end of the twelfth century. Its focus is that literature written in the Irish language pertaining to this period. This literature exists in many varied forms, such as poetic verse, law tracts, hagiography (saints' lives literature),

the Mythological cycle, the Ulster cycle, the cycles of the kings literature, folk literature, Ossianic (Fianna) literature, onomastic lore (place-lore), etc. This writer has selected eight major categories of early medieval Irish literature in which references to music are read, analysed, and collected from. Each of these eight categories used to form the Collection is explained in some detail, as follows:

- i) Mythological Cycle tales and sagas: A collective term applied to the stories in Irish literature which primarily describe the activities of otherworldly personages. Dr. Daithi O'hOgain states, "The basis for the cycle is ancient Celtic myth, and many of the characters are Irish manifestations of a Celtic pantheon of divine beings. The central story of the cycle was concerned with a battle between two supernatural groups. This theme is found in other Indo-European sources--such as the conflict between the Devas and Asuras in Vedic literature, between the Aesir and Vanir in Norse, and between Zeus' family and the Titans in Greek. In Irish myth this conflict was between the divine Tuatha De Danann and the demonic Fomhoire, and, based on this ancient lore, an account of their struggle was written down in the 8th c. A.D." (16) This account situated the battle at Mag Tured (Moytirra, near Lough Arrow in Co. Sligo). Thus, the primary tales from this cycle that have music references in them, and are therefore relevant for this Collection, are: Cath Maige Tured I, ("The First Battle of Moytura"), Cath Maige Tured II, ("The Second Battle of Moytura"), Tochmarc Etaine, ("The Wooing of Etaine") and Lebor Gabala Erenn ("The Book of Invasions of Ireland").
- ii) Dindshenchas (Place-lore poems): The name Dindshenchas means "history or lore of prominent places". (17) The learned fili of early Ireland were generally responsible for the preservation of place-lore, among many other functions. By the ninth century onwards, "we have a series of onomastic poems...and by the early twelfth century these poems were brought together in one great unit known as the Dindshenchas. There is no full surviving manuscript of this work, but in all there were nearly three hundred poems, many accompanied by a prose synopsis. Each poem has the heading of a particular place name, and it then relates a story which purports to explain the origin of that toponymic." (18) The writers of the Dindshenchas drew on many sources for their material, such as the earlier

Mythological, Ulster, and Fianna tales, as well as oral tradition. Folklore and legend(s) regarding specific place names were also used, in addition to the information that was known to be historical fact, so a fair number of the place names include purely legendary material. A second recension of the Dindshenchas was compiled about a century later, in which many of the verse-texts are repeated, but its prose adds length to the stories and variety to the interpretations. Dr. Daithi O'hOgain states that "a great deal of the material is still structured in the form of mere speculation, and most of the genuine narratives involved are adoptions of stories known from earlier texts." (19) Nonetheless, the Dindshenchas does include various references to music, musicians, and musical instruments which are included in this Collection.

- iii) Ulster Cycle tales and sagas: The Ulster Cycle is a large corpus of heroic tales, based on the Ulaid, an ancient people from whom the Ulster province was named. The capital of this area in the tales is Emain Macha. The major tale of the Ulster Cycle is entitled Tain Bo Cuailnge ("The Cattle Raid of Cooley".) It includes the well-known Boyhood Deeds of Cu Chulainn, for example. It is believed that Tain Bo Cuailnge was "written down for the first time toward the middle of the seventh century by a file who may have had some of the Latin learning of the monasteries, and who also wished to record the native heroic tradition in a worthy form." (20) The development of the epic has been analysed by many scholars, and the various stages of its development are thought to have occurred in three recensions, to be further discussed in the next section. The basic material which the compiler used is believed to have derived from a version of the narrative which was committed to writing as early as the seventh century. "This narrative is taken to encapsulate many aspects of the culture of the ancient Ulaid, portraying a warrior-aristocracy organised on the lines of a heroic society and providing an authentic picture from the inside of an Iron Age Celtic culture. The military-political situation described in the narrative was explained by a series of 'pre-tales' which were put together at a quite early date in support of the Tain. These 'pre-tales' also preserve fragments of myth and ritual from ancient tradition, and thus the general corpus evidences several details which can be compared with what Greek and Latin writers on the Continent attribute to the Celts known to them. The details include fighting from two-horse chariots, head-hunting for prestige, single combat between warriors while opposing armies stand by, the awarding of the best portion of meat to the greatest champion at a feast, and the general custom of cattle-raiding as a test of martial prowess." (21) Such subjects are also addressed



in the other famous Ulster cycle tales, such as Longes mac nUislenn ("The Exile of the Sons of Uisliu"), Mesca Ulad ("The Intoxication of the Ulstermen"), Fled Bricrend ("The Feast of Bricriu"), Tain Bo Fraich ("The Cattle-Raid of Fraich"), Togail bruidne Da Derga ("The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel"). These and other Ulster Cycle tales have various references to music, musicians, or musical instruments in them and are included in the Collection.

- iv) Cycles of the Kings literature: These tales are not only about kings, but about kingship, the founding of dynasties, dynastic succession, and the fortunes of the royal houses of Ireland and her provinces. Stories about several of the famous kings of Ireland, such as Conaire Mor, to Conn of the Hundred Battles, Cormac mac Airt, Niall of the Nine Hostages, and Domnall son of Aed, figure prominently in this cycle of tales. In such tales, the relation between the king and his realm is often portrayed as a marriage--the country is a woman, the spouse of the king, and before her marriage to the destined king, she is often portrayed as an old hag, or a deranged woman. The tales from this section also often tell of battles, perhaps most notably Cath Maige Mucrama ("The Battle of Mag Mucrama"), Cath Almaine ("The Battle of Allen"), Orgain Denna Rig ("The Destruction of Dind Rig"), and Cath Maige Rath ("The Battle of Moira"). Other of the Cycles of the Kings tales deal with adventures to the Otherworld, such as the well-known Echtra Cormaic i Tir Tairngiri ("The Adventures of Cormac in the Land of Promise"). Yet others tell of unusual anecdotes of a particular king, as with the story of King Eochaid having the deformity of horse's ears, or, tales of the death of a king, as with Aided Muirchertach ("The Death of Muirchertach"). Generally, these particular tales largely come from fifteenth-century manuscripts, but the tales are known to be from a much earlier era. All of the above tales have references to music in them, and are included in this Collection.
- v) Echtra/immrama literature: The immrama literature, often called "vision/voyage" literature, is a genre that includes the motif of an individual, often a saint, like St. Brendan, for example, travelling by sea to various island paradises. From Betha Brennain ("The Life of St. Brendan"), we have an example of this literary genre, which developed out of the religious ideal and practice of pilgrimage overseas, the necessity of leaving family, friends, and country for the love of God. This type of pilgrimage, the peregrinatio, is bound up with the ascetic tradition and practice of seeking out deserted places in order to lead a solitary life of prayer and contemplation dedicated to God. In many such

vision/voyage tales, saints encounter many different countries, islands, and adventures in search of the perfect Christian life, and often choose to return home again. These vision/voyage accounts often portrayed how one could search all over the world, in many types of glamorous places in search of the ideal Christian life, only to end up preferring to return home, realizing that the ideal Christian life can indeed be lived at or near one's own monastic community. Many of the Irish saints made such "voyages" around the Continent and Britain, for which they became widely known as good teachers and examples of the ideal Christian life. The places portrayed in this vision/voyage genre may not be meant as portrayals of Heaven, the Other-world (or Hell) as in some other purely visionary literature; but they do represent some form of supernatural ideal.

- vi) Excerpts from the Acallam na senorach ("The Colloquy of the Ancient Men"): This tale, from the Ossianic, or Fianna, literature, was written down in the late twelfth-early thirteenth century, and is a corpus of stories and tales about the Fianna that attempts to put them into a loose unity called Acallam na senorach. This work portrays the last, noble, remaining Fianna warriors, who have survived their companions and live to very old age, to encounter St. Patrick on his travels throughout Ireland. He questions them eagerly, curious to learn about the customs and culture of early Ireland, and two in particular, Cailte and Oisín, respond as eagerly, resurrecting the golden past in a spirit of noble melancholy. The ancient ones travel with St. Patrick and his men throughout Ireland, and as they come to certain places connected with the names and deeds of the Fianna, they expound accordingly with tales of the heroes and events that took place, often with song or poetic verse. Music is often mentioned, with particular reference to the supernatural music of Cascorach, a sidhe musician. At St. Patrick's request, these stories and tales are written down by an assistant, so that they might provide entertainment for lords and nobles until the end of time. Of course, many of the stories were in existence much earlier, and from the point of the writing down of the Acallam, the saga of the hero Finn mac Cumail was the favorite subject of storytellers for generations.
- vii) Early Irish Poetry: We are here concerned with the genre of Old Irish "hermit poetry", as it is often dubbed, as it pertains to various monks and hermits of the sixth through eleventh centuries. The clerics who wrote these poems also wrote hymns, prayers, saint's lives, etc., all in the Irish language as well as Latin. Many of these Old Irish poems (up to and including the twelfth century) tell of life in solitude, often out in the wilderness, in

dedication to God. Such poems portray the personal feelings of the hermit/poet and of the joys and sorrows of Christian life. An example of this genre is a tenth-century poem entitled "King and Hermit", which is a dialogue between the legendary Marban, who has decided on a monastic life, and his brother Guaire, the seventh-century king of Connacht. In this particular poem, his brother tries to bring him back to the court and its secular life. It illustrates the contrasts between their respective lifestyles. Other poems from this hermit poetry speak of the elements around the hermit's hut, (i.e., the trees, the wind, etc.) and the "music" of the river, for example. One can sense the personal feelings expressed by the hermit/poet as to his life, with its characteristic heights and depths. Some of this poetry derives from the Old Irish glosses written on certain Latin manuscripts, and are today often preserved on the Continent. Many of these poems contain references to music, and offer an interesting and varied group of references in this Collection.

- viii) Saints' Lives, those written in Old/Middle Irish: The Irish saint's lives written in Latin have not been chosen, as this thesis is confined to the literature written in the Irish language only. Generally, the fifth through the eighth centuries are the time frame in which the saints that are celebrated in Irish hagiography lived. The actual writing of the biographies began in the seventh century and continued until well after the end of the Middle Ages. Latin and Irish are the languages used, with the Latin texts with a slight majority. Dr. Daithi O'hOgain states that the writers of Irish hagiography, like their counterparts abroad, drew on material from several different sources for their themes, plots, and imagery. Such sources included not only the Old and New Testaments, the Apocrypha, and biographies of Continental saints, but also Irish and Classical works of secular literature, as well as oral tradition from within the monasteries and from the populace in general. "It is sometimes quite difficult to unravel the various strands of lore in the texts and to determine how much of the accounts have direct historical value, but it must always be born in mind that many of the biographies were written with the definite purpose of advancing the prestige of particular paruchia or monasteries." (22) Thus, the hagiographers often did not hesitate to borrow, or even fabricate, material to enhance a particular profile of a saint. Such Irish saints as Adamnan, Brendan, Colman, Columcille, Declan of Ardmore, Fechin of Fore, Fursa, Kieran, Mochuda, Moling, and Patrick figure prominently in this Collection of music references from the early medieval Irish saints' lives.

### Dating the Excerpts

4) Many of the manuscripts in Old and Middle Irish were written in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries, from earlier manuscripts or oral tradition. Scholars have dated each manuscript according to its linguistic style and content, often stating, for example, "an eighth-century tale, written down in a late twelfth-century manuscript". For clarity, each music reference in the Collection has a Manuscript section, where all that is known about where, and from which, manuscript(s) the reference derives is noted, and an Approximate Dating section, in which further commentaries about the known (or conjectured) date(s) of the material is given. In certain instances, one can see that several scholars each have an independent viewpoint as to a particular manuscript's age and/or origin(s), but for the most part there is fairly uniform agreement. At either rate, each separate opinion, and manuscript reference, is noted for clarity, as this is a reference Collection. Much of the earliest material in this Collection comes from various manuscript fragments, each of which is independently noted in the Manuscript section of each reference, and with the relevant folio numbers added.

### Christian and "Pagan" Texts

All texts come from Christianized Ireland and from Christian authors/scribes. This writer has no intention of attempting to say here that some of this material survives intact from the primal [i.e., pre-Christian] period, or how much of the primal past can be reconstructed from this Christianized material. This is a fierce

debate in the field of Irish Celtic studies, primarily stated in terms of "nativist" and "anti-nativist".

Briefly, the "nativist" position is that this early Irish literature retained barely adulterated repositories of pagan belief in the vernacular of Old or Middle Irish, "belief which had been handed on by lay scholars (though by now of course processed by very complacent clerics), handed on in a purely oral form (though by now of course more crudely reproduced in writing), in a backward-looking, isolated and only superficially christianised Ireland. The end result: 'mere antiquarian assemblages' living on into a medieval Christian Ireland which somehow, despite this pagan and backward-looking mass in its midst, managed to exercise the most profound influence on cultural revival in continental Europe around the time of Charlemagne." (23)

The "anti-nativist" view, as one might expect, sees the existing corpus of early Irish literature as "a coherent and flexible Christian senchus, constructed by monastic literati, both clerical and lay, primarily in Latin (though with some substantial use of the vernacular), in a cosmopolitan Ireland which boasted a typical medieval Western outlook, which was up-to-date in its learning and thoroughly influenced by the Bible and by prominent Patristic writings. The literature adapted, of course, and suitably modified a remnant of pre-Christian traditions which were oral up to the fifth century, but increasingly thereafter set down in writing by these same Christian monastic literati." (24)

The chief proponent of the "anti-nativist" view is Kim McCone, who

published the controversial Pagan Past and Christian Present (Maynooth 1990).

As this thesis is one on the phenomenology of religion, this writer will not attempt to defend one side or the other here, but, merely to show each music reference exactly as it appears in the texts. In the Collection, both the Irish text and the English translations are given.

Instead, this writer works with the distinction between overtly primal and overtly Christian contexts of each music reference, i.e., one in which dramatis personae, events, locations, or times are exclusively or predominantly represented as or known to be non-Christian or pre-Christian and vice versa. Similarities or continuities between these contexts may say something about a level of mutual accessibility of primal and Christian material; but no part of this dissertation is to argue further issues about the inculturation of Christianity, much less to contribute to the aforementioned nativist/anti-nativist debate.

5) Comparative Material: This is not a comparative study. This material is illustratory, designed to convey some sense of the widespread nature of features noted about music in the literature of other world cultures. Many times a great similarity in the descriptions of the effects of music on the listener(s) might be noted from other cultures, but this is not a comparative study per se. We are here simply showing that the early Irish were "registering the realities" of music as it pertained to their culture, and were not alone in doing so. Other cultures, too, seem

to notice something about music as an investigative and expressive medium, and it would clearly take another study to do a proper comparison between any two cultures.

We will now take a look, in turn, at each of the five major categories of analysis of this material-- Performers, Instruments, Effects, Places and Times--as the references from the Collection of early Irish literature reveal. Each category is a separate chapter, incorporating examples from the Collection as an aid to the principal task of explaining and analysing the material.

The reader will need to make continual reference to the Collection for fuller lists of examples (noted in the text) of each analytic category used. The Collection, of course, could also stand on its own as a text from which any reader or scholar could form other or further analyses of the early Irish attitudes to music as revealer of reality as they experienced and expressed it.

- 1) Mackey, J.P., Power and Christian Ethics, Cambridge, 1994, p. 174-5.
- 2) Ibid.
- 3) Cooke, D., The Language of Music, London, 1959.
- 4) Ibid., p. 41.
- 5) Ibid., p. 44.
- 6) Ibid., p. 272.
- 7) Trevarthen, C., "Sharing Makes Sense: Intersubjectivity and the making of an infant's meaning", Language Topics: Essays in Honour of Michael Halliday, [ed. R. Steele and T. Threadgold], Amsterdam, 1987, p. 189-191.
- 8) Ibid.
- 9) Cooke, op. cit., p. 273.
- 10) Dossey, Dr. L., "The Body as Music", Music and Miracles, [ed. D. Campbell], Wheaton, IL, 1992, p. 55-7.
- 11) Ibid.
- 12) Le Mee, K., Chant, New York, 1994, p. 123-5.
- 13) Ibid., p. 127.
- 14) Ibid.
- 15) Dossey, op. cit., p. 57.



- 16) O'hOgain, D., Myth, Legend, and Romance: An Encyclopedia of The Irish Folk Tradition, New York, 1991.
- 17) Williams, J.E.C., and Ford, P., The Irish Literary Tradition, Cardiff, 1992, p. 35.
- 18) Ibid., p. 363.
- 19) Ibid.
- 20) Williams, op. cit., p. 97.
- 21) O'hOgain, op. cit., p. 414.
- 22) Ibid., p. 379.
- 23) Mackey, J.P., "Christian Past and Primal Present", Edinburgh, 1991.
- 24) Ibid.

## PERFORMERS OF MUSIC IN EARLY MEDIEVAL IRISH LITERATURE

### Introduction

The role of the musical performer in the early medieval Irish literature includes a cast of characters of great variety. Chief among these are musical performers believed to inhabit another dimension of existence, i.e., what is often termed the Otherworld in discussions of Celtic literature. This Otherworld dimension was believed by the early Irish to be quite continuous with their everyday, mundane world. Thus, these otherworldly performers of music in this literature are often portrayed as special intermediaries between the mortal and Otherworld dimensions, and as such, the line between this Otherworld dimension and the mundane existence of everyday life was often crossed.

Mortal musical performers in this literature, on the other hand, embody traits of being somehow "sacred" or "superhuman", i.e., supernatural in some manner. Often they are given special skills and talents denied to ordinary mortal musical performers, or, in keeping with the ancient Irish tradition of the aes dano--those of the artistic elite, who had special gifts and inspiration--many musicians, especially harpers, were considered to be of an elite class and more generally gifted and somehow "sacred".

In the analysis of the material which follows, we will look in turn at the supernatural performers. We will look at the supernatural performers who visit the ordinary, everyday world, and describe them interacting there with ordinary mortals. Then we

will look at those mortal performers who are more especially gifted than other performers, sometimes by being brought to an other-worldly dimension and then to return from there; such gifted mortals are "selected" for an encounter by the Otherworld beings. Such gifted performers were often also members of the aes dano. Next, we shall look at the category of those mortal musical performers who, although they may not actually visit an other-worldly dimension or have any contacts with supernatural personages, nonetheless have, or are deemed to have, special talent and musical gifts--and are also often considered to have a place in that privileged group, the aes dano. Such gifted mortal performers were themselves considered to be somehow "sacred", and thus bestowed upon with unique musical gifts from the Otherworld. Finally, we will take note of those everyday mortal entertainers who, although not of the aes dano, were still highly appreciated in early Irish society.

These categories we shall see placed side by side, and one may notice an almost continuous line from the Otherworld to this world. But before we engage in a detailed analysis of the material in these categories, it is important to say a few words about the privileged, somewhat sacred group called the aes dano, and on the Celtic Otherworld dimension and its inhabitants, before I develop each of these categories in turn.

i) the aes dano

According to one of the early Irish law tracts on rank and position in early Ireland, the Uraicecht Becc, [8th-9th c.] there

were two major social distinctions in society. One was whether an individual was nemed, meaning "privileged", or not; the other was whether someone was soer, "free", or doer, "not free". The basic meaning of the Old Irish term nemed is "sacred, holy", and most often applied to kings, the clergy, lords, and members of what was called the aes dano, such as poets of the higher variety. The term "dana" may have come from the Latin word "donum", meaning a "gift" of a special type, a charisma or inspiration, which could perhaps explain why these people were deemed nemed.

Kim McCone, in Pagan Past and Christian Present, states that the aes cacha dana olchenae, also called the aes dano, were "the people of every art besides", and were part of the doer-nemed category. [1] Some law tracts include the harpist as part of the aes dano, among those of the lower nemed class, along with physicians, judges, talented blacksmiths, especially gifted jewellers, and other skilled craftsmen. As such, harpists were, it appears, singled out for special status that was not accorded to other musicians, and were thus considered privileged free persons in society.

The Uraicecht Becc lists seven grades of fili (poet), each with its own honor-price and privileges. Such higher grade fili not only recited poetry and genealogy, but also were credited with great supernatural powers and knowledge, and, like some of the musical performers in this literature, were seen as special intermediaries between the Otherworld and everyday, mundane reality. It may be that such gifted fili sang as well, in which

case we could include them amongst musical performers. But scholars disagree as to what constitutes a poetic song or a poetic incantation, and whether such practices can indeed be considered as musical performance at all. Lower grades of poets were called "bards" as opposed to fili, and as Douglas Hyde states in A Literary History of Ancient Ireland, "...the real name for a musician was oirfideadh, and the musicians, though a numerous and honourable class, were absolutely distinct from the bards..." [2] So, it appears that bards were not considered to be musicians, and as there is still much academic debate as to whether the fili sang or not, one cannot automatically assume that they were musicians per se.

In general, however, someone of the highest grade of fili was also considered to be a type of poetic prophet--i.e., an exceptional example of a supernaturally gifted individual of the artistic elite. This is not unlike one of the especially gifted master harpists, who was likewise considered to be a type of "intermediary" between the Otherworld and everyday, mundane reality.

A master harper was called a sui cruitirechta. McCone explains that "low ranking wrights include chariot-makers, house-builders decorators, engravers and shield-coverers, but two of these crafts may be combined to obtain a modest increase to the same status as a master harpist." [3] Obviously, the sui cruitirechta, a master harpist, was held in high esteem, and the harp itself was placed above all other musical instruments in early

Ireland. The sui cruitirechta had the special privilege of entertaining kings and nobles on a regular basis. [Further discussion of musical instruments will be given in a later chapter.]

Kim McCone and other scholars believe that there was a type of elite artistic aes dano in the early monastic communities as well. There was a 'tribe of the church', with differing orders, grades, and functions; it was consciously modelled on the tribe of Levi, and it formed a network among the local kingdoms of early Ireland. As monastic communities were large, like cities, they naturally needed skilled musicians, poets, artisans, smiths, etc. McCone points out the value of singers and musicians to the tribe of Israel. In Old Irish, a singer of psalms in the monastic community was called a salmchetlaid. McCone and other scholars believe "that the Bible, particularly the legal sections of the Pentateuch, exercised a major influence upon both the theoretical framework and the actual contents of even the earliest Irish law tracts, whether canonical or secular, in Latin or the vernacular...That said, it is indisputable that Old Irish law was consciously linked with that of the Old Testament." [4] The connection of the singer of psalms with the Otherworld we shall see later.

According to the Uraicecht Becc law tract on status, however, the only entertainer with independent legal status (soire) is the harpist, the crutiri. He is expected to play music to bring on tears, (goltraige), to bring on joy, (gentraige) and to bring on sleep, (suantraige). Other entertainers are described as belonging

to subordinate professions. Fergus Kelly, in A Guide to Early Irish Law, clarifies this situation, as follows:

In addition to lower grades of musician (e.g. cuislennach, "piper") cornaire ("horn-player"), there are many other entertainers who perform at feasts and assemblies...the juggler...jester...acrobat...and others. [As a footnote:] The Irish esteemed the harp beyond all other instruments; thus, the proverbial saying 'every music is sweet until it is compared with the harp'...Triad 89 (YBL version) gives the three excellences of Ireland as 'a wise quatrain, a tune from a harp, a shaving of the face'...[5]

ii) The "sidhe" world and its inhabitants

Musical performers in the early Irish literature are often described as being part of the Otherworld--i.e., it is their "home", this other dimension of existence. This Otherworld and its various supernatural personages is often called the world of the sidhe-folk. Such sidhe-folk personages are seen as special supernatural beings who intervene decisively from time to time in the affairs of men. Amongst them are other supernatural beings, the old gods of pre-Christian Ireland now euphemized. They are often called the "fairies" or the "Good People" in early folklore.

Dr. Daithi O'hOgain states how this Otherworld community and its mythic beings "was understood to be a kind of spiritual community whose nature was on a different plane to that of the human race. As such, they were called by the literati the Tuatha de Danann and were described as living in a timeless realm." [6] Evans-Wentz states that "The Tuatha de Danann, or sidhe-folk, the 'Gentry', the 'Good People', and the 'People of Peace', are described as a race of invisible divine beings eternally young and unfading. They inhabit fairy palaces...and have their own music

and minstrelsy...and they are gods of light and good..." [7]

Tomas O'Cathasaigh in "The Semantics of 'Sid'", shows how the old Irish term sid can mean both 1) an Otherworld hill or mound; and 2) peace/peaceful. He states that since "the Irish conception of the Otherworld, as it is expressed in the literature, is extraordinarily complex...The character and nomenclature of the Otherworld show an admixture of native and ecclesiastical elements. A case in point is Tir Tairrngiri, which came into Irish as a translation of "terra repromissionis" (the Promised Land of the Old Testament), but which...is used in a thoroughly pagan context" in other examples in the literature, with tir tairrngiri generally thought of as the Land of Promise. [8]

O'Cathasaigh further clarifies the issue of the many various descriptive terms used for the Otherworld, and of sid/sidhe:

Amidst all the confusion, however, sid enjoys a special status as a term for the Otherworld; it is the normal generic term which can be used without further definition to denote the Otherworld. It differs in this important respect from Mag Mell, Tir na mBeo, etc. which are descriptive terms. It is true that, when used of a particular localization of the Otherworld, sid seems almost invariably to refer to a mound or tumulus... [9]

Thus, in this literature many descriptive terms of the Otherworld are used: mag mell ("the Pleasant Plain"), eamhain abhlach ("the Region of Apples"), tir na nOg ("the Land of Youth"), tir innambeo ("the Land of the Living"), etc., but the term sid or sidhe is considered the basic generic term.

The sidhe Otherworld is described in this literature as being inhabited by various mythic personages--the sidhe-folk. Like



angels in the Bible, such beings are believed to at times interact with our human world, although they are from a timeless realm. Many of these otherworldly personages are described in the literature as also being musical performers. Such supernatural musical personages are often portrayed as teaching a mortal musician special playing techniques. For a mortal musician to encounter such a personage, this experience is portrayed as an unusual one and is described in this literature as dramatically altering an individual's life.

### SUPERNATURAL MUSICAL PERFORMERS

An example of such a supernatural musical performer is that of Cascorach, described as a musician of the sidhe-folk in the literature. He is a player of the timpan, a sweet-sounding stringed instrument. This "fairy musician", as one of the sidhe-folk or Tuatha de Danann, is described as walking, talking, and interacting like a human, yet we know he is not a mere mortal. From the Accalam na Senorach, ["The Colloquy with the Ancient Men"], Cascorach plays for the clergy:

He took his timpan, tuned it, and on it played a volume of melody the equal of which for sweetness (saving only the dominical canon's harmony and laudation of Heaven's King and Earth's) the clergy had never heard. Upon them fell a fit of slumber and of sleep and, when he had made an end with his minstrelsy, of Patrick he requested its recompense..."  
[from Collection, Ref.85]

Cascorach is a famous sidhe-folk musical performer in the early Irish literature, and is a representative example of this type of performer. He is portrayed as a supernatural musician

interacting with ordinary mortals, and his timpan playing consistently gets the very best reviews.

As an example of a "wee" sidhe-folk musician, Senbecc plays for early Irish hero Cuchulainn while he is performing the feat of the nine heroes on the bank of the river Boyne. While catching salmon, Cuchulainn sees a wee man in purple, and a small boat of bronze, and he converses with this supernatural musical performer:

"...`What little thing is that with thee?' asked Cuchulainn. `A small harp,' said Senbecc, `and shall I play it to thee?' `I am pleased', said Cuchulainn. Then he ran his fingers over it, in such wise that Cuchulainn kept shedding tears at the melancholy tune. Then he played the merry tune, and Cuchulainn kept laughing continually. He played the sleepy tune, and Cuchulainn was in sleep and continuous slumber from one hour to the other..."

[See Collection Ref. 33]

The early Irish literature has numerous other examples of sidhe-folk musicians and their interactions with mortal humans. They are invariably described as coming from the various sidhe-folk dimensions, such as an earth mound or tumulus, an underwater world, or from the air. These musicians include Cnu Deroil, the famous elfin wee harpist of hero Finn mac Cumhaill, and other sidhe-folk personages as the Dagda, Lugh, Midir, Manannan, Aillen mac Midhna, keening fairy women, mermaids, and the infamous "nine pipers of the Sid Breg", who could kill, but never be killed themselves. For these and the many other examples from this literature of the various sidhe-folk musical performers, see Collection References: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 16, 17, 18, 27, 29, 33, 39, 44, 46, 48, 54, 55, 57, 58, 63, 67, 75, 77, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 96, 97, 98, 120, 155.

We have already seen an example of a sidhe-folk musician, Cascorach, playing for the clergy. The implications of that encounter are discussed by St. Patrick and his colleague Brogan:

"`A good cast of thine art was that thou gavest us,' said Brogan. `Good indeed it were,' said Patrick, `but for a twang of the fairy spell that infests it; barring which nothing could more nearly than it resemble Heaven's harmony.' Says Brogan: `if music there be in Heaven, why should there not on earth?, wherefore it is not right to banish away minstrelsy.' Patrick made answer: `neither say I any such thing, but merely inculcate that we must not be inordinately addicted to it.'" [See Collection, Ref. 86]

As represented in this early Irish literature, Patrick is portrayed as believing that there was clearly a dangerous, or perhaps seductive, quality to this fairy music. He is shown as describing it as having a "twang of the fairy spell that infests it", indicating that this "twang" is not of this world, yet clearly not of Christian origin. He does not, however, outright ban such music as evil; instead, he makes a warning "not to be inordinately addicted to it". Here, he is portrayed as believing that there a distinct possibility that one may indeed become addicted to this music's spell--even, apparently, a clergyman. Patrick agrees that music has heavenly legitimation; but he is clearly worried about the question of which Otherworldly dimension or Heaven the music is associated with.

The supernatural performers which the Christians themselves recognized include such musical performers as angels, trees, stones, insects, bells, mermaids, "unseen" music--e.g., music that is heard, but yet no performer is visible--and, finally, Heaven or

paradise itself as a musical performer all its own.

One sterling example of the portrayal of the Christian Heaven, here entitled the Land of the Saints, is filled with numerous musical performers, all singing praises to God in harmony:

...the Land of the Saints...everyone in the Land of the Saints is equally near to hear the songs and to contemplate the vessel in which are the Nine Orders of Heaven in accordance with their ranks and their station. Part of the time the Saints sing a marvellous song in praise of God, and the rest of the time they listen to the song of the Heavenly Host, for the Saints have need of nothing but to be listening to the music to which they listen and to behold the light to which they look at...and the song of the birds of the Heavenly Host makes music for them. Glorious bands of the guardian angels are continually doing obeisance and service among these assemblies in the presence of the King...They celebrate the eight canonical hours...the choral song of the Archangels coming in in harmony. The birds and the Archangels lead the song, and all the Heavenly Host, both saints and holy virgins, answer them in antiphony...there are three precious stones making soft sounds and sweet music between every two principal assemblies...[Note: the angel then shows St. Adamnan Hell, and explains:]...Now while the saintly companies of the Heavenly Host sing joyfully and gladly, the harmonious chorus of the eight canonical hours, praising the Lord, the souls give forth pitiful and grievous howls as they are beaten without respite by throngs of demons...[10]

[See Collection, Ref. 134]

From this one example, one can see that the supernatural musical performers in the Christian Land of the Saints are angels, the Saints, birds, and three precious stones; and it is clear that human performers join in, the saints and holy virgins, with all of them singing praises to God.

In another instance, the Christians themselves recognized a

special Tree of Life in Heaven, complete with a singing flock of birds on it, as follows:

"...the Tree of Life with its flowers, the space around which noble hosts were ranged, its crest and its showers on every side spread over the fields and plains of Heaven. On it sits a glorious flock of birds and sings perfect songs of purest grace; without withering, with choice bounty of fruit and leaves. Lovely is the flock of birds which keeps it, on every bright and goodly bird a hundred feathers; and without sin, with pure brilliance, they sing a hundred tunes for every feather..."

[See Collection Ref. 173]

Here, both a special tree and birds are described, and it is clear that this music never ceases in Heaven.

From Betha Brennain, ("The Life of St. Brendan"), the Christian Heaven is seen as inherently musical and as a unique performer of supernatural music itself. This is explained as such to St. Brendan and his clergymen by a wise old monk on an island Paradise:

"`Search ye and see,' saith he, `the plains of Paradise and the delightful fields of the land, radiant, famous, lovable, profitable, lofty, noble, beautiful, delightful. A land odorous, flower-smooth, blessed. A land many-melodied, musical, shouting for joy, un mournful..."

[See Collection, Ref. 136]

An example of the Christians recognizing an insect as a supernatural musical performer occurs in a similar voyage by clergymen. In Imram Curaig Ua Corra, ("The Voyage of the ui Corra"), bees sing to flowers in Heaven:

"...Another beautiful bright island was shown to them. Shining grass was therein, with a variety of purple-headed flowers. Abundance of birds

and ever-lovely bees singing music to the heads of those flowers. A very aged, grey-haired old man playing a harp was in the isle. He was chanting a wonderful melody that was the sweetest of the melodies of the world..."

[See Collection, Ref. 77]

Another example shows the Christian clergy recognizing a mermaid as a supernatural musical performer while out at sea. From Aided Eochaid meic Mairid, ("The Death of Eochaid, son of Mairid"), a reference to the chant of a mermaid is portrayed:

As Beoan's people therefore navigated the sea, from under the currach they heard a chant as of angels and Beoan [the cleric] questioned: 'whence this song?' 'It is I that make it,' answered Liban, a mermaid...

[See Collection, Ref. 83]

"Unseen" music--that where no musical performer is witnessed, yet it is clearly heard as coming from Heaven--is portrayed in the following example from "The Life of St. Colman":

...the boy was brought up piously and humbly; and wherever he used to be they would hear psalms and choral song, and the sound of a bell at every canonical hour, and the singing of mass every Sunday, so that people would come to ask, 'what was the assembly that came here last night?'...

[See Collection, Ref. 139]

In this example, a bell is also considered to be part of the music of Heaven, in addition to "unseen" music.

For the Collection references to the above categories of supernatural musical performers which clearly occur in an overtly Christian context, see the following references: angels [134, 138,

143, 154, 159, 164, 171, 172]; birds [19, 76, 79, 82, 134, 137, 151, 158, 159, 165, 173]; insects [77]; mermaids [83]; trees [78, 134, 158, 169, 173]; bells [135, 140, 141, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 156, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170]; Heaven itself as a supernatural musical performer [134, 136, 142, 143, 173]; mysterious "unseen" music [138, 139, 146, 147, 157]; and stones [72, 134, 149].

We will now look at parallel supernatural musical performers of these kinds in overtly primal contexts. The same phenomena are described as being musical as with those Christian contexts given above--birds, stones, trees, insect(s), a mermaid, "unseen" music, and the primal Otherworld itself as a musical performer.

For example, from Echtra Taidg maic Cein, ("Adventure of Teigue, son of Cian"), birds are featured as being musical in the primal Otherworld:

...Birds beautiful and brilliant feasted on these grapes...as they fed, they warbled music and minstrelsy that was melodious and superlative, to which patients of every kind and the repeatedly wounded would have fallen asleep; with reference to which it was that Teigue chanted this lay following: 'Sweet to my fancy, as I consider them, the strains of this melody to which I listen.'...

[See Collection, Ref. 65]

This is reminiscent of the earlier Christian context whereby birds are a prominent part of the Christian Heaven/Paradise.

Stones, too, are portrayed in an overtly primal context in the early twelfth-century tale Immram Brain ("The Voyage of Bran"):

...Then they row to the bright stone  
from which a hundred songs arise.  
Through the long ages it sings to the host  
a melody which is not sad,  
the music swells up in choruses of hundreds,  
They do not expect decay nor death...

[See Collection, Ref. 72]

Trees also appear in overtly primal contexts, perhaps most notably in an example from Serglige Con Culainn ("The Wasting Sickness of Cuchulainn"):

...At the entrance to the enclosure is a tree  
 From whose branches there comes beautiful  
     and harmonious music.  
 It is a tree of silver, which the sun illumines,  
 It glistens like gold...

[See Collection, Ref. 42]

The fly, an insect, is portrayed in an overtly primal context as being a musical performer in Tochmarc Etain ("The Wooing of Etain"), whereby Etain, a beautiful young maiden, is turned into a fly by the jealous sorceress Fuamnach. She then appears, as a fly and a musical performer, to her beau Midir:

...Sweeter than pipes and harps and horns  
 was the sound of her voice and the  
 hum of her wings...

[See Collection, Ref. 8]

A bit later, Midir, in his lonely misery, has great comfort in Etain, as a musical fly, who visits him, thus:

...as long as he could watch the scarlet fly,  
 Midir loved no women, and he did not enjoy  
 food or drink or music, unless he could  
 see it--[Etain, as a scarlet fly]--and  
 listen to its music and its buzzing...

[See Collection, Ref. 10]

Mermaids, too, appear in an overtly primal context in the place-lore, the Metrical Dindshenchas. In one such poem, the location of "Port Lairge", modern-day Waterford, is described:

...And there he heard the sound,  
 it was a lure of baleful might,  
 the chant of the mermaids of the sea  
 over the pure-sided waves...



The hosts of the world would fall asleep  
listening to their voice and their clear notes...

[See Collection, Ref. 27]

"Unseen" music comes from the brazen net of a noble fairy woman at the entrance to her Otherworld abode in a verse recension of the tale Immram Curaig Maile Duin ("The Voyage of Maile Duin"); this obviously occurs in an overtly primal context:

...She went from them and closed the noble pleasant fort: her net, manifesting mighty power, chanted good harmonious music.

Her musical choir lulled them to sleep...the noble woman's music used to play for them, but no banqueting hall was seen...

[See Collection, Ref. 109]

For the various Collection references to the above categories of supernatural musical performers that occur in an overtly primal context, see the following references: birds [28, 38, 41, 65, 66, 73, 110, 120]; insects [8, 10]; mermaids [27]; trees [21, 42, 56, 68, 110]; the primal Otherworld as a musical performer itself [9, 22, 23, 39, 69, 70, 71, 74]; "Unseen" music [109]; and stone(s) [72].

#### Illustratory Comparative Material:

In other cultures we find otherworldly musical performers. For example, the Bible has angels--and other supernatural beings who may or may not be angels--described as musicians. Examples include: the four living creatures that "never stop singing" in John's Revelation (Rev.4:8 and 5:8); John's vision of many angels singing and chanting to God around the throne with the four living creatures (Rev. 5:11); the seven angels with their seven trumpets

to perform at the time of the Apocalypse (Rev. 8:6); John's vision of Mt. Zion, whereupon he hears the sound of angelic harpists singing a new hymn around the throne (Rev.14:2); later, these angelic beings also sing the hymn of Moses (Rev. 15:3) at the time of God's Judgment.

In Jewish theology, specific angelic realms of the various Powers and Principalities have musical epithets. The Archangel Uriel is often described as "the Angel of Music". [11] The Seraphim, the highest order of God's angelic servants, are believed to "ceaselessly chant in Hebrew the Trisagion--Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh---`Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of His Glory', while they circle the Throne." [12] These fiery supernatural beings of pure Light are clearly portrayed as musical performers.

In Islamic theology, the Heavens are spoken of as being seven in number (sura 78:12) as stated in the Koran. [13] "Angels fill the `stairs' of Heaven (sura 70:3f) and witness of themselves that they are ranked in progressive degrees (sura 37:164-166). Those of highest standing sustain the throne of God, singing praise and glory to their Lord (sura 40:7) and interceding on behalf of human beings." [14]

The origins of Chinese music, according to the Chinese themselves, lies in the mysterious legendary period of the third millennium B.C., where Chinese historians maintain that "the ancient texts of China associate the establishment of their music with five enigmatic, legendary personages, who, it is said, were

China's first monarchs...Divine in nature, these five rulers are credited with the entire genesis of the civilization...The first of them, Emperor Fu Hsi, is said to have been the founder of the monarchy and the 'inventor' of music...The following four divine rulers also placed great emphasis on music..." [15]

#### MORTAL MUSICAL PERFORMERS: but with Otherworld influence

Another important class of musical performers exists in the early medieval Irish literature. Here we have a very small, but valued group of gifted mortals, who are described as having various special contacts with supernatural personages or beings from the Otherworld. Often, these gifted mortals were also members of the aes dano, those of the privileged artistic elite in society, with whom we shall deal in the next section. Members of this small group of gifted mortal musicians are often portrayed as having been selected, or perhaps "abducted" at times by the sidhe-folk, to go with them to the Otherworld dimension and play for them. Most often harpers, these musical performers are usually described as coming back to the everyday, mundane world with the claim that they personally received music training and advice on special playing techniques and/or special melodies, from these supernatural personages.

As an example, the gifted harpist and poet Corainn was offered a "deal" by such supernatural beings, described in the literature as coming from the Tuatha de Danann, in exchange for playing his exquisite harp music. Corainn, a gifted mortal musician, was

blessed by the Tuatha de Danann, the implication being that he was either abducted or hired to play for them. As a result of the Tuatha de Danann being greatly pleased with his enchanting music, they offered him land in their world as payment--clearly an unusual opportunity for a mortal. The doctor of the Tuatha de Danann, Dian-Cecht, is described in this example as Corainn's patron.

The Metrical Dindshenchas mention a specific location called "Ceis Corainn" [literally, "the harp of Corainn"] to mark the very spot where Corainn was said to have had this experience, and this location is noted to this day. Corainn then returns to the everyday, mortal world, and this location remained in the memory of the people:

Here abode gentle Corainn  
playing on the harp--it was good riches;  
Corand white of skin was a poet  
in the service of Diancecht, giver of sound limbs.

The Tuatha De (excellent name) bestowed  
land in fee, for his goodly music,  
on Corand of the soothing strains:  
for his knowledge he deserves high esteem...

[See Collection Ref. 14]

Another example involving Corainn is also from the Metrical Dindshenchas, this time referring to his supernatural patron and the consequent power of his music. Here, his harp music, so exquisitely beautiful and powerful, is seen as a type of "spell" or influence to summon a pig from a distance. It appears that the animal was influenced by the music, although it was not anywhere near the vicinity of Corainn:

Mag Corainn, whence the name? Not hard to  
say. Corainn, harper to Diancecht the

Dagda's son, called with his harp Caelcheis,  
one of Drebbriu's swine...

[See Collection Ref. 24]

One instance from the Ulster cycle, from the tale Tain Bo Fraich ("The Cattle Raid of Fraich"), describes how a talented mortal harpist summoned supernatural spirit-images around the strings of the harp while he played his beautiful music. Similar to Corainn's music summoning a pig from a distance, here we have a harper's music summoning such spirit-images while entertaining:

...`Let thy harpers play to us,' said Ailill to Froech; `Let them play...' said Froech. They had harp-bags of otter-skins covering them, with red ornament overworked with gold and silver. Deer-skin around them in the middle as white as snow, with dark grey spots in the center. Coverings of linen, white as the plumage of swans, around the strings. Harps of gold and silver and white bronze with figures of serpents and birds and hounds on them. Those figures were of gold and silver. When those strings moved, those figures used to turn around the men. [the harpers]...

[See Collection Ref. 47]

Such an incident seems to imply in this literature that an especially gifted mortal's music can summon supernatural spirit-images which are then seen to go around the musician as he plays. It also implies, albeit indirectly, that this type of an experience is rather unusual, and not every harper has the power or ability to summon such spirit-images.

Another manner in which a selected mortal could have musical influence(s) from the Otherworld was the following instance from the Metrical Dindshenchas, in which a man goes up to a particular mountain, falls asleep and is shown a vision and "receives" his own

song:

As I slept (pleasant the manner)  
therein I met with the theme of my song:  
there was shown me truly and in full  
every fairy mound that is at Cend Febrat...

[See Collection, Ref. 15]

Thus, after the man woke up he came back to the everyday, mundane world a musical performer with his own song, obtained in this Otherworld dream state--his own unique tune.

A specifically Christian example of a selected mortal having interaction with the supernatural regarding music and then returning to everyday, mundane life, occurs in the Tripartite Life of Patrick. Here, St. Patrick, selected by God, goes up to Heaven and has a discussion with an angel about a particular song--a hymn in praise of God--which he then takes back to use in his often difficult missionary work. Thus, Patrick asks the angel:

...'Is there aught else He granteth to me' saith Patrick. 'There is,' saith the angel: 'every one who shall sing thy hymn, from one watch to the other, shall not have pain or torture.'  
'The hymn is long and difficult,' saith Patrick.  
'Every one who shall sing it from 'Christus illum' to the end, and every one who shall give aught in thy name, and every one who shall perform penitence in Ireland, his soul shall not go to Hell' [said the angel to Patrick]...

[See Collection Ref. 166]

Another example of a selected Christian mortal encountering musical angels in God's Heaven, and then returning to everyday, mundane life, is that of St. Fursa. In Betha Fursa ("The Life of St. Fursa") he has an experience of going up to Heaven, as the following excerpt illustrates:

...when he had built the church we have mentioned,  
a serious illness attacked him therein from one



Saturday to another, as the Book of his own Life relates; and from evening to cockcrow he was taken out of his body, and he heard the chanting of angels of Heaven, and he beheld them before him. And this is what they were chanting: 'Ibunt sancti de uirtute in uirtutem' [Psalm 83:8] i.e., 'the Saints shall advance from virtue to virtue.' And this [is] also what they were chanting: 'Videbitur Deus deorum in Sion.' [Psalm 83:8] i.e., 'the God of Gods will be seen on Mt. Zion'...

[See Collection, Ref. 154]

The especially selected Christian mortals were often monks or clergy. From The Tripartite Life of Patrick, the day St. Patrick was ordained in Rome, three choirs responded--the choir in Rome, the choir of the children from the wood of Fochlad in Ireland, and the choir of Heaven, all simultaneously:

...Then, too, was the name 'Patricius' given unto him, a name of power as the Romans think, to wit, one who looseth hostages. He, then, loosed the hostageship and slavery of the Gael to the Devil. And when the orders were a-reading out, the three choirs mutually responded, namely, the choir of the household of Heaven, and the choir of the Romans, and the choir of the children from the wood of Fochlad. This is what they all sang: 'All we Irish beseech thee, holy Patrick, to come and walk among us and to free us'...

[See Collection, Ref. 164]

Thus it would appear from this excerpt in the literature that two of the three choirs had some kind of a supernatural linkage--one responded from far-away Ireland at the moment of St. Patrick's ordination, and the other responded from God's Heaven. The third choir, that of Rome, is portrayed as an "ordinary" mortal choir, present at the ordination, and singing as expected. The other two choirs thus represent supernatural musical performers

singing in conjunction with this mortal choir, all celebrating the ordination of St. Patrick. After his ordination, St. Patrick is later portrayed as going back to his ordinary, and often difficult, missionary work in Ireland.

In another overtly Christian example, St. Brendan is portrayed in this literature as a selected mortal having a divine visitation from St. Michael, in the form of a shining, singing bird. A student harpist wishes to play for St. Brendan, and St. Brendan resists his offer, stating that he has heard better music--that of God's Heaven. He explains this incident to the student harper:

I saw a shining bird at the window, and it sat on the altar. I was unable to look at it because of the rays which surrounded it, like those of the sun...`who are you?' said Brennain. `The angel Michael,' it said, `come to speak with you.' `I give thanks to God for speaking with you,' said Brennain, `and why have you come?' `To bless you and to make music for you for your Lord,' said the bird...[says St. Brennain to the student harper:]...`After that music, no music of the world seems any sweeter to me"...

[See Collection, Ref. 137]

For the few other examples in the literature of a selected Christian mortal having supernatural experiences or contacts with music, see Collection references: 147, 158, 159, 160.

#### Illustratory Comparative material:

Ethnopsychologist Dr. Holger Kolweit in his research regarding the shaman found that "...in the Beyond, he is taught the songs he brings back to earth, the songs which express his shamanic power and by which he transports himself back..." [16]

Hence in general shamanic lore a visit to the Beyond can



result in musical gifts. When an ordinary mortal musician has such an experience, he is usually portrayed as an especially gifted musician, and is so selected by supernatural personages or beings for some kind of an encounter or experience. In a few instances, such a selected mortal can return from an Otherworld experience with new musical skills or knowledge.

The tale of Thomas the Rhymer of Ercildourne from Scottish folklore describes a talented mortal lute player who has an abduction experience involving the Queen of Elfland, and returns transformed. One day, as he is sitting in a small wooded area,

...[he] plucked idly at his lute strings, and heard above his own music a distant sound like the trickle of a hill-side stream. Then he started to his feet in amazement; for down one of those green pathways rode the fairest lady in the world... 'Play your lute to me, Thomas,' she said; 'fair music and green shade go well together.' So Thomas took up his instrument again, and it seemed as though he had never before been able to play such lilting tunes. When he had finished, the Elf Queen showed her pleasure...[17]

He then goes with the Elf Queen to her Otherworld abode, under the condition that he not speak one word while there for a period of seven years, a taboo. He does not speak, and returns rewarded with not only his legendary musical skills, but the gift of prophecy as well. He then became known as a seer who always told the truth and as one who could foretell many events, in addition to his having outstanding musical skills.

A more modern-day example of such a "musician abduction" is described as follows by an old piper of Co. Galway, who speaks of

a brother piper he knew personally and of his experiences:

...`There used to be an old piper named Flannery who lived in Oranmore, County Galway. I imagine he was one of the old generation. And one time the Good People took him to Fairyland to learn his profession. He studied music with them a long time, and when he returned he was as great a piper as any in Ireland. But he died young, for the Good People wanted him to play for them." [18]

Another situation that often occurs in world folklore is that of an innocent, unsuspecting mortal--sometimes a musician, but not always--who is invited to attend a sidhe musical celebration. The mortal, if a musician, nearly always comes back to the everyday, mundane world with a new song and/or musical techniques. If not a musician, the mortal is still greatly transformed by such contact with these supernatural personages, for good or ill.

One such example from Islamic folklore describes a young devout Muslim boy named Hussein, a singer, who was "tricked by the jinn" into joining their music and circle dancing celebration while walking in a country valley at twilight:

...as he was walking in the valley, he gradually became aware of an evening celebration...Robed figures were clapping and dancing as an old man played a fiddle. Laughter filled the air. As he drew closer, Hussein could tell from the clothes, and then the faces, that they were friends of his...[someone then welcomed him]...`Hussein! We have been expecting you. Come and dance the `warrior round'. The music was quite intoxicating, and the syn-copated clapping of his friends quickly spun the spell that drew Hussein into the center of the group. Soon he was lost in the haunting melody for hours...Eyes blurry with dizziness, he happened to glance down...and horror shot through [him] like lightening!...[he then realized:] `My friends--their feet are on backwards! They have hollow eyes! These are jinn! I've been tricked

into joining a jinn celebration. Oh, God, save me...oh, Ali, please save me'...[19]

The boy then was suddenly all alone and it was nearly daybreak; he had unknowingly been gone for hours. He was then ill for six months or so and nearly died--his family attributing this strange illness to the lure of the haunting music of the jinn. The account states that the boy then became an even better singer than before his experience with the jinn.

MORTAL MUSICAL PERFORMERS: Especially members of the Aes Dano

Gifted mortal performers, even if they have not had the unique privilege of being selected by supernatural personages from the Otherworld, are still portrayed as having an important place in early Irish society. The early Irish literature consistently makes reference to various types of entertainers who play music at king's banquets, nobles' palaces, and the fairs and festivals of the people.

Irish harpists in particular were highly valued by the aristocracy and the monastic orders as well as by the people. The monk and scholar Giraldus Cambrensis, writing in a famous twelfth-century work extolling the virtues of the Irish harpers, describes them thus:

They are incomparably more skillful than any other nation I have ever seen. For their manner of playing these instruments, unlike that of the Britons [or Welsh] to which I am accustomed, is not slow or harsh, but lively and rapid, while the melody is both sweet and sprightly. It is astonishing that in so complex and

rapid movement of the fingers the musical proportions [as to time] can be preserved; and that throughout the difficult modulations on their various instruments, the harmony is completed with such a sweet rapidity. They go into a movement and conclude it in so delicate a manner, and tinkle the little strings so sportively under the deeper tones of the bass strings--they delight so delicately and soothe with such gentleness, that the perfection of their art appears in the concealment of art. [20]

Clearly, many merely mortal harpists were very gifted individuals. Likewise, other musical performers in early Ireland, particularly singers, are also described as very gifted; however, not all such gifted mortals were members of the aes dano. Usually, for example, harpists were members, as were certain elite court singers; other musicians who usually were not members were the more common variety of singers, i.e. travelling minstrels, horn-players, percussionists, etc. As suggested at the beginning of the chapter, for those musicians who were deemed members of the aes dano, there is an implication in the very name that they are "gifted", not by special encounter, but by occupation of their profession--theirs is a permanent gift. And as they are "nemed", the suggested source of the gift indicates the Otherworld. It is not easy to draw a line between aes dano musicians and others; only to give examples.

The later monastic communities in Ireland also highly regarded music, especially the singing of the psalms and hymns. The young boy who would later become St. Mochuda explains to the king why he had been gone so long in the following example:

...`Sir, this is why I have stayed away--through  
the attraction of the holy chant of the

bishop and the clergy; I have never heard anything so beautiful as this; the clerics sang as they went along the whole way before me; they sang until they arrived at their house, and thenceforth they sang till they went to sleep...And I wish, O king, that I might learn' [their psalms and ritual]...

[See Collection Ref. 161]

Such chanting of the clergy was highly valued in Irish monasteries. For other references to mortal Christian musical performers, i.e., monks chanting, or a bishop using his bells to curse a pagan king, etc.--see Collection references: 60, 144, 145.

One should also note mortal musical performers of the non-human kind which frequently find mention in our sources. The hermit poetry of the Christian monastic communities in particular reflects an appreciation of a great variety of non-personal musical performers. Such perceived "performers" of music as blackbirds, geese, ducks, bees, wrens, larks, swallows, the sea with its "song", the wind, etc. are all seen by the monks as having musical qualities uniquely their own. Such performers as those mentioned above here occur in an overtly Christian context, as the commentaries of a monk expressing praise and glory of God.

For example, from the famous tenth-century hermit poem entitled King and Hermit:

...swarms of bees and chafers, the little  
musicians of the world,  
A gentle chorus: Wild geese,  
and ducks, shortly before summer's end,  
the music of the dark torrent...

An active songster, a lively wren  
From the hazel-bough

Beautiful hooded birds, woodpeckers,  
A vast multitude!...

[See Collection Ref. 100]

Another such example is that of a ninth-century Christian hermit poem entitled "The Scribe In the Woods", as follows:

A hedge of trees overlooks me; a blackbird's  
lay sings to me (an announcement which I cannot  
conceal); above my lined book the birds'  
chanting sings to me.

A clear-voiced cuckoo sings to me (goodly  
utterance) in a grey cloak from bush fortresses.  
The Lord is indeed good to me: well do I write  
beneath a forest of woodland.

[See Collection Ref. 104]

Such references show mortals, in this case monks, explaining how they perceive such musical performers as exemplifying God's glory in their environment. They are clearly greatly appreciative of such natural performers, and feel blessed to write about them.

For other such hermit poetry examples, see Collection References: 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 131, 132. For further examples of ordinary mortals as musicians and entertainers, see Collection references: 12, 13, 31, 36, 43, 45, 51, 59, 95.

#### Illustratory Comparative Material:

The Bible certainly has a rich and varied tradition of valuing music and mortal musicians. Examples abound, such as: music of tambourine-players and harpists as joyful unto the Lord (Gen. 31:27); the singing to Yahweh of the Song of Victory by Moses and the Israelites (Ex. 15); the mention of the sounding of the trumpet on the Day of Expiation (Lev. 25:9); trumpets as a battle cry

(Num. 10; John 8:2 and 8:6); the Psalms of David, etc. Such examples from the Judeo-Christian tradition indicate a belief in the power of music in general, as well as an appreciation of the musicians themselves, be they clergy or lay persons.

According to the Sufi tradition, music expert Inayat Khan states that a musician or singer "becomes an instrument of the whole cosmic system, open to all inspiration, at one with the audience..." [21] The famous performer from India, Ravi Shankar, when speaking of the great musical performers of the past, states that "these great musicians were not just singers or performers, but also great yogis...they were pure, ascetic, saintly persons..." [22]

The power of singing is exemplified also by Paramahansa Yogananda, who believed in something he aptly described as "super-conscious singing". Such singing by talented mortals had many different levels, for example, "singing aloud, whispered singing, mental singing, subconscious singing, superconscious singing..." [23]

### CONCLUSION

Musical performers in the early Irish literature range from the purely supernatural performers to the everyday, mundane entertainers. We have seen this general continuity from the clearly supernatural performers to the very special, but small group of gifted mortal performers who are "selected" or "invited" by such supernatural personages. Most, but not all, of such

selected, gifted mortal performers were also members of the aes dano. We then saw further continuity to the other mortal musicians, albeit talented and gifted, the gifted mortal performers who were not "selected" unlike those performers in the previous group. Then, we have the other more ordinary musical entertainers like travelling minstrels, horn-players, etc.--those who most likely were not members of the privileged aes dano artistic elite. Nonetheless, such performers were still highly appreciated in society. We then saw a further continuity to birds, animals, and natural elements portrayed in the literature as musical performers.

The overall impression is that of an unbroken line of musical performers ranging from the purely supernatural to the most mundane--with the originating and most powerful influences coming from the Otherworld, and the most mundane music also being capable of revealing links with the supernatural Otherworld realm. This is true, be it in an overtly Christian or primal context. All musical performers, simply by being performers, are linked by music to its ultimate Otherworld source--even if they are only more ordinary, everyday musicians, birds, animals, or the natural elements.

One example of this continuity in an overtly Christian context is that of ordinary choirs of monks singing their psalms in praise of God; they are thus seen as connecting to a divine source through their music.

St. Basil in his teaching on prayer, comments on vocal prayer, or divine psalmody, and directs his monks to be diligent regarding it:

Psalmody, he says, is divine both in its measures



and in its words...[it is] the continuation of the harmonies of Heaven...[it is] the sweet song of the Holy Spirit Himself, contrived out of love for the use of his children here below...St. Basil directs his monks to devote themselves with alacrity, diligence, and fervor as the special means their monastic profession places at their disposal of rendering honor and glory to God...[24]

It is the music itself that clearly binds all members of this unbroken line of musical performers portrayed in this literature to its supernatural source of ultimate perfect music/harmony. We will see this phenomenon more fully in the chapter on the Effects of music on the listener(s).

Just as there is this parallel continuity in overtly Christian and overtly primal sources, there is also a certain parallelism in the "personnel" of performers at each level in these two sets of sources. In the Otherworld of overtly primal contexts, there are sidhe-folk musicians, and also birds, animals, and the elements as performers. In the overtly Christian contexts, as well, there are angels as musicians, birds (St. Michael as a bird in one example), and the natural elements--all portrayed as being an integral part of the glory of God's Heaven. This parallelism of "personnel" occurs on down through those "selected" mortal musical performers and further on down to the more permanently gifted musical performers, etc.

This parallelism would seem to indicate a kind of recognition of the "continuity of line" of musical performers and, as a consequence, of some supernatural influence--in both primal and Christian terms. Regarding this connection, it is interesting to analyse more closely the text of Patrick's encounter with

Cascorach.

In the previously stated example whereby St. Patrick and his clergymen encounter the musician Cascorach of the sidhe-folk, St. Patrick says "...but for a twang of the fairy spell that infests it... nothing could more nearly than it resemble Heaven's harmony"... He later states, after his fellow clergyman Brogan comments:...I "merely inculcate that we must not be inordinately addicted to it..." [See Collection, Ref. 86, for full reference]

St. Patrick clearly states that the clergy should not totally banish away minstrelsy, thus acknowledging a qualified acceptance of the sidhe-music as special and valuable in some way. However, if he feels that such bewitching sidhe-music is acceptable as part of worldly goodness, on the other hand, he is cautious about it and implies that God's Heaven and its music is clearly and ultimately preferable.

It is as if he is concerned as to which "heaven" such bewitching sidhe-music might come from or lead to, and thus warns his fellow clergy that "we must not become inordinately addicted to it"--as it has a "twang of the fairy spell", as St. Patrick says in this literature.

On both counts, the Christian spokesman, St. Patrick, recognizes the power of the sidhe-music as very real--and that is what is meant by saying that there seems, as portrayed in this literature, to be a "continuity of line" of musical performers and thus a recognition of the supernatural sources of the music. This recognition seems common to both overtly Christian and overtly

primal contexts; it is the background for a certain degree of recognition, at least from the Christian side, which we see in this particular text.

Such sidhe-music is acknowledged by the clergy to come from an Otherworld realm, but St. Patrick is portrayed as believing that such music, although beautiful and powerfully enticing to the listener, is not from the Christian Heaven, which he clearly prefers. He is therefore warning his fellow clergymen about the possible dangers of becoming "inordinately addicted" to such music and being lead into this other non-Christian Otherworld realm. In his view, nothing can compare with the harmony of God's Christian Heaven--a realm from which he implies that the bewitching sidhe-music of Cascorach does not originate. Therefore, he seems to imply, good Christian listeners should not be lead astray by such musical temptations.

These examples show a belief about music from the Christian spokesmen that acknowledges a "continuity of line" from the Otherworld down to the mortal musical performer. Whether this is thought of as a "saintly" Christian Otherworld, or as a bewitching, "devilish" Otherworld, it is still thought of by the Christian clergy as clearly originating from a supernatural source that is not of this world. Performers are conceptualized by the Christian clergy as being clearly influenced by this Otherworld realm while playing their music, and, it is implied, so is the listener of the music. Such a "continuity of line" from the Otherworld down to the

everyday, mundane musical performer is a concept that clearly comes through when analyzing this literature of early Ireland.

N O T E S: Chapter Two/Performers

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## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IN EARLY MEDIEVAL IRISH LITERATURE

### Introduction

Music in early medieval Irish society was played on musical instruments of various types. Chief among these were the harp, timpan, fiddle, bagpipe, horn, trumpet, pipe/recorder, and the bell. In this chapter we will first look at the various instruments involved, and later explore those references to them from the Collection itself.

### I) INSTRUMENTS OF EARLY MEDIEVAL IRELAND

The musical instruments of early Ireland fall into several categories familiar to musicologists and historians of early Irish civilization. These instruments are consistently mentioned in the early manuscripts and law tracts, which form the chief sources for analysis. These major instruments mentioned in the references from this Collection are: the crott or cruitt (harp), fidli (fiddle), timpan (timpan), tinne (a set of bagpipes), cuisle (a single pipe in the tinne), pipai and buinne (other pipe instruments), stoc or sturgan (trumpet), corn (horn), and cloc (bell). References to the instruments referred to in this Collection originate from the Irish saints' lives, the law tracts, and the earlier tales and place-lore of early medieval Ireland.

#### A) THE CROTT OR CRUITT ("Harp")

The Old Irish terms for the harp include the crut, crott, and cruitt. crott or cruitt is translated as harp or lute in the Royal

Irish Academy dictionary. (1) A later Irish term for a harp is the clairseach. Several harps, and harpists, are sculptured on the high crosses of early Ireland, from which we can attempt to form a picture of their shape and size, and possibly try to more clearly determine what the instrument might have been like in the early medieval, pre-Norman time period. Mr. Keith Sanger and Alison Kinnaird in Tree of Strings: crann nan teud, state the following regarding the history of the harp in Ireland and Scotland:

...By the 8th or 9th century, the time of the earliest iconographical representations, there seem to have been several different stringed instruments being played in Scotland and Ireland. There is academic debate whether these should be described as 'lyres' or 'harps'. The two names seem to have been used indiscriminately by early writers and this, added to the fact that the sources of our information have sometimes been translated from Gaelic into Latin and subsequently into English, compounds the confusion...many of the writers were also foreigners and were ignorant of musical terminology, particularly that of the alien culture that they were attempting to describe...(2)

Thus, we need to clarify what terms are used to describe what instruments. For our purposes here, the Old Irish term of crott or cruitt has been correctly translated as "harp", while the Old Irish term timpan refers to a similar, but not identical, stringed instrument, which will be further discussed later. According to musicologist Curt Sachs, the harp has the strings running away from the soundboard, exposed on both sides, and the lyre has strings which run across the board, often over a bridge. (3)

The carved stone high crosses of Ireland show instruments which appear to be four-sided, rather than the three-sided harp



familiar to us today. Joan Rimmer, in her classic work on The Irish Harp, has done a study of the images of harps on the high crosses of early Ireland. The carving on the South Cross at Castledermot shows a musician with a quadrangular harp on his knee; this carving is believed to be ninth-century. This harp, with its six strings, seems to be quite similar in structure and size to the remains of the six-stringed harp found in the Saxon ship burial at Sutton Hoo in England. (4) The tenth-century cross at Clonmacnoise shows a round-topped four-sided lyre in its depiction of the Scriptures, and is also portrayed as being played on the knee of the musician. The tenth-century cross of Muiredach at Monasterboice includes a depiction of what Rimmer describes as "an oblique topped lyre". (5) It also shows a bird perched on top of the instrument and a player of triple pipes. There are many other such crosses of the pre-Norman time period in Ireland, but what is striking, as Rimmer and Sanger both point out, is that "there are few which can be regarded as harps and no triangular-framed harps at all. There are no representations on the Irish crosses of the triangular-framed harp as we know it." (6)

It does appear that regarding the harp in the period before the twelfth century in Ireland, what is largely referred to is a quadrangular instrument, i.e., a "four-angled" harp, as even exemplified by one of the references from the Collection to "coir-cethar-chuir"--"four-angled music". [See Collection Ref. No.3]. The first undisputed example of a three-sided harp in Ireland appears on the Shrine of St. Mogue, which probably dates from the

eleventh century. So it appears that the early Irish harp was most probably a four-sided instrument, as seemingly confirmed by the texts from the references to this Collection, and from the early medieval stone crosses of Ireland.

It appears that the cruitt (harp) of the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries in Ireland was of a medium or smaller size than the harps of today, the average height being about 30 inches, and some appear to have had up to twenty-five strings. They were often made of willow with brass strings. Smaller harps, usually eight-stringed and around sixteen inches, were used to accompany singers or poets. This harp was often called a ceis, and was used to accompany the larger harps and was used by the fili to accompany their verse. The tuning key for the harps, called crann-glesa ("tuning wood") was considered so important that provision was made in the Brehon Law, with penalties, for its prompt return, should a harper lend it. (7)

Some scholars believe that the early Irish clergy sometimes played the harp, and carried a small, portable harp with them on their extensive missionary journeys to Gaul. The clergy used the harps in conjunction with the singing and chanting of their psalms, in the tradition of King David, and it is believed that the type of harp they used may have been an eight-stringed Psalterium, similar to the early Assyro-Hebrew Psalterium used in Jewish services. The number of strings, eight, seems to indicate the use of the diatonic scale in church music.

them.

The history of the harp as an instrument and how it may have arrived in Ireland is a point of great debate and conjecture. The sources begin with the first century B.C. Roman writer Diodorus Siculus, who described the instrument used by the Celtic bards as similar to the Roman lyre. Nearly five hundred years later, another Roman historian, Ammianus Marcellinus, who lived around 360 A.D., stated that the Celtic bards sang to a sweet-sounding lyre. Unfortunately he did not differentiate exactly what the perceived differences were between this Celtic lyre and the Roman lyre he was referring to, and one must remember that the Romans did not invade Ireland. The well-travelled and learned Giraldus Cambrensis (Gerald of Wales) in his Topographia Hibernia iii, describes the musical instruments in use in early Ireland, Scotland, and Wales in the twelfth century. He heard the Irish harpers in 1185 A.D., and, in a famous passage, he exalts their great talent; thus:

They are incomparably more skillful than any other nation I have even seen. For their manner of playing on these instruments, unlike that of the Britons [or Welsh] to which I am accustomed, is not slow and harsh, but lively and rapid, while the melody is both sweet and sprightly. It is astonishing that in so complex and rapid a movement of the fingers the musical proportions as to time can be preserved...(8)

From this extract, it appears as though Giraldus was clearly referring to an instrument that was plucked with the fingers, and not bowed. He then later states that the Irish had two major instruments, notably a type of harp and the timpan. From the above example, it would seem that Giraldus was clearly referring to a harp and he also seems to indicate that this instrument was not

identical to the timpan, both instruments that he seems to have been familiar with in some manner.

For comparison and further analysis, we may look to the early Welsh material, written down in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, from which the History of Wales by Caradoc of Lhancarvan was extracted. The term here for harp is the Welsh telyn. This term was always used in the Welsh Laws for the instrument meaning a harp. Early Welsh harpers often went to Ireland to learn their craft. It is clear from the early Welsh Laws that a harp with a "horse-hair" bow was in use in Wales in the twelfth century, and was considered to be used by the inferior harpers. The chief harper was entitled to a fine from each minstrel who exchanged this "hair-strung harp" for a "better" one, most likely of brass strings, on becoming a fully qualified harper. (9) But such a hair-strung harp is not mentioned in early medieval Ireland, as the crott and cruitt are believed by musicologists to have had metal strings.

The four-sided Psalterium seems to have been especially the instrument of ecclesiastics, while the crott or cruitt was primarily for lay purposes, and was an earlier instrument in Ireland. The Psalterium is mentioned as being part of Irish monastic life and seems to be similar to the kinnor (harp) of the Hebrews, possibly similar to the instrument that David played for King Saul in I Samuel 16:23. The kinnor was often thought of as being three-sided, thus, more like the early Greek Trigonon. The Old Testament instrument called the Hhasor, which most likely had

ten strings, is mentioned along with the kinnor and the nebel in psalm 92:3.

The harp is the national symbol of Ireland, and was often viewed as such by Continental writers. Likewise, many European writers through the centuries extolled the harp as being an Irish phenomenon, often giving the highest compliments to the Irish harpers and their legendary skills, as did Giraldus. The references from this Collection also seem to glorify the harp as an instrument and extoll the effects of its music. The term "lyre" in this section is used interchangeably with the term "harp" by the various English translators of this material from the Old and Middle Irish sources. Because of this situation, it is not possible to decide from the Collection references whether the so-called "lyre" they mention is in any way different from the harp, or, if so, in what manner.

#### B) THE TIMPAN

The timpan is believed to have been a stringed instrument similar to a harp with metal strings. Some musicologists believe that it might have also been bowed--unlike any references to the crott or cruitt. According to Cormac's Glossary, the timpan (or what is referred to as a timpan) had a frame of willow wood with brass strings; it is also described in the Acallam na Senorach as having treble strings of silver, bass strings of white bronze, and tuning pins of gold. (10) In Ireland, the timpan is often described as hand-held, rather small, and seems to have had few strings--perhaps up to eight. In other instances, it appears to be merely a

small harp, plucked with the fingers. It is often described as being a "sweet-sounding" stringed instrument.

Musicologists are divided on the issue of exactly what the timpan was, but most writers believe that the Irish timpan was an instrument with metal strings, and most likely was plucked with the fingers, like a harp, or, perhaps it was bowed, like a lute, as some scholars maintain. Dr. Anne Buckley in her comprehensive study believes the timpan to have been a lyre-type of instrument and not a harp. (11) John Bannerman points out that in medieval Latin tympanum meant 'drum', 'tambourine', or occasionally 'psaltery', a stringed instrument, but [that] in Gaelic timpan clearly described a stringed instrument, and believes it to have probably meant the quadrangular lyre shaped harp, and not a triangular one. (12) So it appears that all we can really conclude for sure is that in this particular literature of early medieval Ireland, the timpan was most likely a type of quadrangular-shaped stringed instrument.

### C) THE FIDDLE

Fiddles are referred to in the literature of early Ireland and Scotland, although the references are quite scanty. The example we have from this Collection is the Old Irish term fidil (fiddle) from the Metrical Dindshenchas poem entitled "Carmun". The fidil is referred to along with other musical instruments in a description of the Fair of Carmun. This is believed to be a twelfth-century manuscript; rather late for our early Old Irish period.

In Scotland, as in England, the fiddle was called the fethill,

after the Latin vidula. Francis Collinson, in The Bagpipe, Fiddle, and Harp states that the Scottish terms for fiddle were fedyl and rybid. He also mentions the croud, which was also a bowed instrument, that is also portrayed on carvings in Rosslyn Chapel and Melrose Abbey. The fiddle is obviously of the same class of instrument as the viola and violin. (13) However, many of the earliest medieval references in Europe to a "fiddle" may not have necessarily been bowed instruments per se. One example, the early Norse fidlu, did not mean a bowed instrument, as in the Old Norse epics before 1200 A.D. In early Ireland, unfortunately, we do not have specific descriptions of what is termed a fidli to know for sure exactly what the precise nature of the instrument was.

#### D) THE BAGPIPES

The Old Irish term for bagpipe is tinne, meaning the whole set of pipes. The pipers themselves are called cuslennach; a cusle or cuisle means one of the pipes in the tinne. Musicologists acknowledge that the bagpipes are of very ancient origin, as they were known in the ancient Middle East and in oriental countries, and they have the design of a double pipe.

The first medieval mention of bagpipes comes from the ninth century Epistle of Dardanus of St. Jerome, whereby the term "chorus" meant a type of bagpipe which has a bag, or skin, with two brass tubes, one of which formed the mouth-piece of the bagpipe, and the other the chanter. (14) Roderick Cannon states that:

...The earliest evidence of bagpipes in the British Isles relates to England: an Anglo-Saxon riddle of the eleventh century, for which 'a bagpipe'

seems to be the answer, and a rather crude carving on a gravestone in Northumberland, thought to date from 1200 A.D. Definite historical records begin with payments to bagpipers who played at the king's court. The word 'bagpipe' itself first occurs in such records in 1334, and in literature, in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, c. 1386. The oldest existing fragments of a bagpipe are also English...from Weoley Castle in Warwickshire and have been dated to the late thirteenth, or fourteenth, century...(15)

The situation in early medieval Ireland is rather difficult to ascertain exactly, as it appears that the early fili and scribes might have continued for some time to apply old names to new instruments, so that where they write cuisle, (which strictly means a flute or single pipe), they were likely referring to a bagpipe, according to Sean Donnelly in his work on the pipes in Ireland. (16) In the Carmun Fair reference from the Collection, Ed Gwynn does translate the term cuislennaiq for "bagpipers", for example. [See Collection Ref. No. 12] The Welsh name of the bagpipe, as it is written in the Welsh Laws, is pybeu, which is similar to the early Irish instrument referred to as pipai meaning "pipes". This is also similar to the Old Norse term for the bagpipe called pipa. The early Irish bagpipe seems to be similar to the modern Highland type of bagpipe, which is inflated by the mouth.

#### E) PIPES/WHISTLES

Other than the bagpipes, single pipe wind instruments were also in use in early Ireland. It appears that a simple pipe was popular, and was referred to in Old Irish as a buinne or bunne, perhaps resembling a modern type of clarinet, recorder or oboe. This was similar to the cuisle or cuislenn, meaning a single pipe



in the tinne--the entire bagpipe complex. It has also been used to mean a type of flute. In the Old Irish Glosses, the Latin term "tibia", a type of pipe or flute, is explained by the Old Irish term buinne. A player of the buinne was called a buinnire.

There is another Old Irish term for a musical pipe called a cuissech or cuisig. This pipe apparently differed in some slight manner from the binne, although one cannot now be sure as to exactly how. These wind instruments, we can surmise, were probably early versions of the flute, recorder, or possibly the clarinet. A whistle in Old Irish was called a fedan, and a whistle-player a fedanach. The Irish tin whistle still maintains an important role in Irish music today.

#### F) TRUMPETS AND HORNS

The Old Irish terms for trumpets include stoc and sturgan. It is possible that the Sanskrit "Stu", to "praise or glorify" shows a close relationship between Sanskrit words and the early Irish terminology. This type of trumpet resembled a long cylindrical bore that emitted a loud, shrill blast. Other Old Irish terms for early Irish trumpets were: corn, buabail, adharc, dudag, gall-trompa, and barra-buad. The corn, a horn-like instrument, was the longer one, it appears, while the stoc was of the shorter variety. A trumpet player was often called a stocaire, while a horn-blower was referred to as a cornaire. We cannot be certain what each type of trumpet or horn looked like; however, we do know that among the household of every king and chieftain, there was a band of

trumpeters--some of which got a seat at the yearly Assembly of Tara, a great honor.

Trumpets and horns were primarily used for warfare, as their shrill blasts both served the purposes of signalling to troops, frightening enemies, and motivating men to fight. Trumpets as a "battle cry" occur in the Bible--as in Revelation 8:2, the seven trumpets of the seven angels of the Apocalypse are sounded at Doomsday, and in the Old Testament the city of Jericho was destroyed by the sound of "seven ram's horn trumpets in front of the Ark" in Joshua 6:4. Trumpets are mostly mentioned as war instruments in early Celtic society, and sometimes as instruments of mere entertainment, as with the Collection examples from the Fair of Carmun. [See Coll. Ref. Nos. 12-13].

The early Irish trumpets and horns are of various shapes and sizes and can be viewed in museums today. Some are of the straight metal variety, others are curved. Trumpets were common in early Ireland, and many have been well preserved in bogs in Co. Cork, and Co. Limerick, for example. They were often made of thin hammered bronze; some appear to have had the blowing aperture on the side, while others were blown from the end, like our modern day trumpets and cornets. The first proper study of the playing potential of these remaining horns in Ireland was made by Siomon O'Duibhir, and "the original horns and rattles were first recorded in 1989 and 1991, when it became clear that the sound world that can be produced from them is extensive and immensely impressive". (17)

G) BELLS

Bells in early Irish society appear to have been used primarily by the clergy. The Old Irish term for bell is generally that of cloc, which is believed to be a loan-word from the lower Latin word "clocca". The origin of the word itself is obscure, although derivatives of it also occur in the Romance and Teutonic languages. The cloc or clocc was an open bell with a clapper, four-sided or round, often made of metal, and were usually used in the service of the Church.

The cloc or clocc was a hand-held bell, made of metal, and was in general use by the clergy in the late eighth century. These bells were used on the altar or as part of Mass. They were also used in monasteries to summon the monks to the refectory for meals, or to assist in the singing and chanting of the Psalms. Gradually, it seems that the cloc later became the exclusive name of large bells placed in the steeples of churches, i.e. the belfry. The distance around a church that the bell was heard was believed to be within its legal boundaries; the early Irish law states that a church was entitled to share the property of strangers dying within the sound of its bell, for example. The original bell of a tuath, ("tribe" or "people") around which it had placed its protection, often determined the rights of a church, and was thus often one of the chief objects in the entire building--the "bell house", called a cloictech.

For our purposes here regarding early medieval Ireland, most of the references to the music of the bell--the cloc or clocc--are

referring to the smaller hand-held variety. Many of these can be seen in museums today. The other type of bells referred to in early Irish literature are the small, closed type of bells, spherical in shape, with a loose ball or pea of metal inside of them. ["jingle bells" in popular jargon.] These bells are portrayed as being used on Fraich's horses in the Tain Bo Fraich, (an eighth-century tale) when he went with fifty horsemen to ask for the hand of Findabair, the daughter of King Ailill. The term for these bells was cluicine. One other reference to a "sweet-sounding little bell" on a warrior's uniform exists, [see Coll. Ref. No. 37] and may refer to this type of bell, or, to a smaller variety of the cloc.

#### H) CNAMFIR

The Old Irish term cnamfir, used also in the Fair of Carmun example, is translated to mean a "bone-player". This would, of course, indicate a type of percussion instrument, perhaps using the "clapping" sound of bones. Musicologist Curt Sachs indicates that the "bones" were a type of medieval "clapper" percussion instrument. However, no one knows for sure what the early Irish term specifically means, as we have only this one example of it. Rudolf Thurneysen, in A Grammar of Old Irish, translates the Old Irish term cnamí, (nom. and acc. pl.) as "bones". The term cnaim means "bone" in Old Irish. (18) So the cnamfir, in its singular form, would mean a "man of [the] bones".

#### I) FER-CENGAIL

This term is translated as "gleemen", as by Ed Gwynn in the

Metrical Dindshenchas. It is believed by other scholars that this Old Irish term was not really that of a musician per se, but, rather, of a jester-like figure who "danced about" in a peculiar kind of hopping or springing dance, known in the twelfth century as the "Espringale". It seems as if they were perceived as some sort of "dancing gleemen". Perhaps, like dancing jesters, the fer-cengail were entertainers often seen with musicians, especially at a fair like the Fair of Carmun mentioned earlier. Some Continental medieval descriptions of dancing jesters, and/or "dancing men" are similar to what may be referred to here by fer-cengail. [The Old Irish term for "steps" is cengait, possibly similar..?].

#### J) THE MUSICAL BRANCH

The musical branch occurs primarily in Imram Brain, or "The Voyage of Bran", an eighth-century tale. It is preserved in several manuscripts, the earliest being the Lebor na hUidre, an early twelfth-century manuscript. These examples are covered in full later. The Old Irish term used for the musical branch in Immram Brain ("The Voyage of Bran") is croib n-arggait, meaning "a branch of silver". In others references, it is also called craebh ciuil, "a musical branch" or crann ciuil, a "musical tree". It is also described as having golden apples on it, or fruit in general. It was often recognized as a sacred object of the poet's (fili) craft in early Ireland. In Celtic tradition in general, the silver branch is given to the mortal by a sidhe woman or an unknown Queen of the Otherworld, or one of her female accomplices. The Golden Bough of earlier classical tradition was often associated with the

cult of Nemea, a goddess. The Irish silver branch seems to also serve the function of being a "port of entry" to the Otherworld; i.e., like a musical passport. The Celtic musical branch is portrayed as a source of poetic inspiration, Otherworld connection(s) , and as a "link" to the Muses or goddesses.

In summary, the major musical instruments of early medieval Ireland as found in the references from this Collection consist primarily of: the crott or cruitt (harp), timpan (timpan), fidil (fiddle), tinne (a set of bagpipes), cuisle (a single pipe or flute), buinne (a single pipe), stoc (trumpet), corn (horn), clocc (bell). We also encounter a percussion-like instrument played by cnamfir (the "men of the bones"), and the silver branch. We will now examine the references to these instruments in the Collection, dividing them in a three-fold manner. Category 1): those musical instruments that occur in a purely supernatural context; Category 2): those instruments that are portrayed in everyday life, yet with some Otherworldly influence(s); and Category 3): those musical instruments that are described as part of everyday, mundane life.

## II) SUPERNATURAL INSTRUMENTS: THOSE IN A PURELY OTHERWORLD CONTEXT

From the Collection we have several examples of what appear to be purely supernatural instruments--such as those that are portrayed as having the power to "hear" or "listen" of their own accord, and/or having the power to take commands from their owner. Others are portrayed as playing music on their own. Often, as one

might expect, such supernatural instruments are also those played by supernatural sidhe personages in a purely Otherworld context. Likewise, some vocal music sung by such supernatural personages is portrayed as occurring in a purely Otherworld dimension, in certain references from this Collection. Because of the inherent Otherworld quality to these particular references, the instruments themselves are portrayed as also taking on supernatural qualities. Keeping this point in mind, we will now take a look at the references from the Collection itself which refer to supernatural musical instruments that occur only in a purely supernatural context.

One reference from the Collection portrays a harp that has the power to "hear" of its own accord, is part of a tale from the early Irish Mythological Cycle. In this example, the harp itself has the ability to hear, and listens to certain specific chants from its owner, the sidhe God, the Dagda. The Dagda had previously "bound" melodies into this particular harp, so it could then only respond to his call, and to no other. From Catha Maige Tuired II ("The Second Battle of Mag Tured"), we have the following:

...Now Lug and the Dagda and Ogma pursued the Fomorians, for they had carried off the Dagda's harper whose name was Uaitne. Then they reached the banqueting house in which were Bres, son of Elatha and Elatha, son of Delbaeth. There hung the harp on the wall. That is the harp in which the Dagda had bound the melodies so that they sounded not until by his call he summoned them forth; when he said this below:

Come Daurdabla!  
Come Coir-cethar-chuir!  
Come summer, come winter!  
Mouths of harps and bags and pipes!

Now that harp had two names, Daur-da-bla, "Oak of two

greens", and Coir-cethar-chuir, "Four angled music". Then the harp went forth from the wall, killed nine men, and came to the Dagda...

(See Collection Ref. No. 3)

The Dagda then plays his special harp, and this aspect is further discussed in the "Effects" chapter.

The supernatural music of a silver musical branch is also featured in some references from the Collection, namely from Immram Brain, ("The Voyage of Bran"). Here, Bran hears mysterious music and soon after a musical branch materializes in his environment:

...At last he fell asleep at the music, such was its sweetness. When he awoke from his sleep, he saw close by him a branch of silver with white blossoms, nor was it easy to distinguish its bloom from that branch. Then Bran took the branch in his hand to his royal house...[then they all] saw a woman in strange raiment...

(See Collection Ref. No. 68)

In this situation, the musical branch appears to manifest from nowhere, and we later discover that this silver branch--a musical instrument--is a gift from the world of the sidhe woman, who then sings quatrains to him and invites him to her Otherworld paradise. As this aspect has already been discussed further in the "Effects" chapter, we will not explore it further here.

King Cormac also has an encounter with a musical branch in his journey to the Otherworld of tir tairngiri ("the Land of Promise"). Cormac receives an unusual Otherworld visitor to his court one day, a sidhe man named Manannan:

...A branch of silver with three golden apples was on his shoulder. Delight and amusement enough it was to listen to the music made by the branch...(See Collection Ref. No. 56)



The instrumentality of the branch is portrayed here, as the branch plays music on its own, reflecting on the Otherworld status of Manannan.

From Serglige Con Chulainn, ("The Wasting Sickness of Cuchulainn"), a late-eleventh century tale, we have what appears to be a tree with inherent instrumentality of its own, in the purely Otherworld dimension of Mag Mell. Here, the charioteer Loeg reports back to Cuchulainn as to what he has seen there:

...There is a tree before the enclosure (to sing in unison with it is not unpleasant), a silver tree upon which the sun shines (its brilliance is as that of gold)...

(See Collection Ref. No. 110)

From the Dindshenchas, the poem entitled "Loch Garman" further illustrates this concept of a tree having an inherent musicality. Cathair, son of Fedilmid, king of Erin from Alenn has a dream, and asks the king's druid to interpret it for him:

...This is the stately music  
that was in the crown of the enduring tree--  
thy noble eloquence, lovelier thereby,  
when appeasing a multitude...

(See Collection Ref. No. 23)

For other references from the Collection which seem to indicate the possible inherent musicality of a tree in an exclusively Otherworld context, please see reference numbers: 21, 42, 78.

The possible inherent instrumentality of water in a purely Otherworld dimension is portrayed in some of the references, where it is implied that the water itself is to be seen as a type of "instrument" with its own music. With such a possible viewpoint,

the unknown, mysterious supernatural Performer is using the water as its "instrument". As these particular references have been more thoroughly discussed in the "Performers" chapter, the reference numbers will be listed here, as pertains to the possibility that the water, or waterfalls, are to be viewed as an "instrument" of their own, as the Old Irish seems to imply: No. 88 (the waters of Assaroe); No. 29: (seven streams of the underwater Well of Connla); No. 57: (five melodious streams from the shining Otherworld fountain in tir tairngiri as heard by King Cormac).

The human voice is probably the very oldest musical instrument known to humanity. Vocal music is portrayed in some of the references from this Collection as part of a purely supernatural context; this singing is often from supernatural personages, as one might expect, or, it simply occurs out of nowhere--i.e., from a mysterious, unknown source. As many of these have already been addressed in full in the "Performers" chapter, they will be merely listed here for cross-reference purposes as to the issue of the voice as an instrument: No. 6 (singing of leech-doctors of the Tuatha De Danann); No. 7 (singing of sirens on an island out at sea); Nos. 9, 16, 17, 46, 58, 67, 74, 75, 88, 98: (singing of various sidhe beings); Nos. 27 and 83 (singing of mermaids); No. 63 (singing of the severed head of a minstrel); Nos. 77, 134, 138, 143, 154, 171, 172 (singing in the Christian Heaven); Nos. 28, 38, 41, 120 (singing of sidhe birds in an overtly primal context); Nos. 65, 66, 73 (singing of sidhe birds as part of an island paradise); Nos. 19, 65, 76, 79, 82, 134, 137,

151, 158, 159, 173 (singing of birds, often in harmony, in the Christian Heaven).

Several of the instruments are often portrayed as being part of a purely supernatural context and have been treated in full in the "Performers" chapter. However, for further clarity and research cross-reference purposes regarding the use of a particular type of instrument in a purely supernatural context, they are merely listed here by number. For all references from the Collection regarding the use of the cruit (harp) in a purely primal supernatural or mythological context, please see numbers: 4, 5, 16, 24, 44, 90, 94. For the Collection references that refer to the use of the cruit (harp) as part of a supernatural Christian context, i.e., Heaven, please see number 77 and 155. For the use of the timpan as portrayed in a purely primal context and deal with the supernatural, see numbers: 1, 33, 54, 55, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 91, 92, 93, 94, 97. For the use of bagpipes and pipes that also deal with the supernatural, please see numbers: 3 and 48. For those references that mention the lute, viola and organ as part of Christian Heaven, please see number 158.

#### Illustratory Comparative Material:

Many of the examples from world literature have supernatural musical instruments as part of a supernatural Otherworld, and are usually played by a supernatural performer.

The German mystic monk Blessed Henry Suso (c. 1295-1366), a contemporary of Yorkshire mystic Richard Rolle of Hampole "not only heard and saw angels playing rebecs, fiddles, and harps...he joined

with them in round-dances, such as Dante had recently described in his Paradiso. Suso, a follower of Meister Eckhart, lived as a monk and wandering preacher..." (19) One of his mystic visions involves vocal music in Heaven, with the voices as musical instrument:

...Now, on the night before the feast of All Angels, it seemed to him in a vision that he heard angelic strains and sweet heavenly melody...[He heard] a portion of the song which the dear elect saints will sing joyously at the last day, when they shall see themselves confirmed in the everlasting bliss of eternity. At another time, on the same festival, after he had spent many hours in contemplating the joys of the angels...there came to him a youth who bore himself as though he were a heavenly musician sent to him by God..(20)

Suso then joined the young heavenly musician and the other angels that then came with him in round-dances.

### III) INSTRUMENTS FROM EVERYDAY LIFE, BUT WITH OTHERWORLD INFLUENCE

The following references from the Collection do not occur in a purely supernatural Otherworld per se, however, in the context of normal everyday life, occasionally musical instruments are themselves portrayed as having supernatural characteristics. This often occurs with the intervention from the Otherworld in some manner, such as in the environment of a Christian saint or a king. We will now look at those references which do not occur exclusively in a purely Otherworld dimension, but which do address the supernatural in some manner, as applied to musical instruments.

The following reference, from the tenth-century tale entitled Inni diata cuslinn Brighde ocus Aidhed mic Dhichoime,

("Whence is St. Brigit's pipe, and the Death of Dichoim's Son"), is part of the Cycle of the Kings literature of early Ireland. Here, the focus is on King Eochaid Feidlech. This tale is also widely known in folklore as "King Eochaid Has Horse's Ears". A short synopsis of the tale needs to be given here first, in order to fully understand the music reference to follow. In the story, King Eochaid has an unusual disability, that of being born with horse's ears. In a desperate attempt to hide this condition from his kingdom, he would kill every man who would shave him. One day, one of the shavers tried to kill him first, and the two of them then made a pact--the young shaver, Mac Dichoime, could remain, as long as he did not reveal the secret. The shaver eventually got very ill, but was then cured of having to keep the situation a secret, by the spilling of his blood near a grove of tree saplings, who "overheard" him. Soon, a harpist with his fellow musicians from Munster stopped at the site for a rest on their journey. The harpist's harp "heard" from the tree saplings the secret of the king. Ironically, the musicians were on their way to play for King Eochaid's court anyway, so, they did so, with the harpist's harp revealing the secret that the king had horse's ears--which it heard from the saplings. Furious, King Eochaid tied up the musicians, who then pled their innocence. Eventually realizing that the tree saplings had revealed the secret and not the young shaver Mac Dichoime, the king frees the musicians and rewards the harpist. Then, the young shaver Mac Dichoime went back to the site of the grove of trees and made himself a double pipe from them, and later became king himself.

The reference itself to the supernatural harp is as follows:

...`Then the harper went to the house of the king, and was well received by him. He and his company were taken to the house where the king was. `Strike up!', said Eochaid. `Harp us something ingenious!' `That is our intention,' they say. They begin to play to him, and what they played was: `Eochaid, the man of the shield, has two horse's ears.' `Let light and a candle be brought to the house!' cried the king. When the light and the candles and the shining lamps had come, he said to his men: `Throw yourselves upon the chest of the harpers and bind them!' And forthwith they were bound, and they continued in their fetters until morning...[King Eochaid then realizes the situation, admits his condition to the populace, and frees the harpers.]...Then, Mac Dichoime (the young shaver) went to the saplings and made a double pipe from them. And afterwards he obtained the kingship after Eochaid, and though he had become king, he did not part from his pipe.

(See Collection Ref. No. 52)

Clearly, Mac Dichoime so greatly valued the special pipe made from the same grove that he kept it throughout his kingship. The harp of the Munster harper "heard" the secret from the tree saplings, and thus revealed it at the king's court. The harp is portrayed here as having some supernatural characteristics, although the context occurs as part of everyday life; it is not in a purely Otherworld context. The grove of tree saplings is also portrayed as being unusual. The reader is left with the impression that the double pipe of Mac Dichoime had perhaps something to do with his eventually becoming king himself.

Bells are sometimes portrayed as having unusual qualities as part of everyday life, especially those in the early Irish saint's Lives. Here we often see examples of a "tongue-less bell" sounding

of its own accord--again, this miracle of God reflecting the otherworldly status of the Christian Heaven. From Betha Colmain ("The Life of Colman"), we have an illustration of a situation in everyday Christian life where a "tongue-less" bell, i.e., one without a clapper, speaks of its own accord at a particular location. This is taken as a signal from God that a monastery is to be built there; here, thirty monks were sent by an angel from St. Mochuta, to go and find St. Colman's community at Lann. They set out with the tongue-less bell of St. Mochuta, and the bell sounds when they arrive at their destination:

...And they are given a tongue-less bell, and they fast one night at every church to which they come. And in that way they wandered around Ireland for seven years, and during all that time their bell never spoke. Then at the end of seven years when they had reached Lann, their bell spoke at the spot called 'Worship of Motura', as they were coming to Lann. So they come to Colman...

(See Collection Ref. No. 140)

In a similar but not identical situation, the following bell also sounds of its own accord, yet it does have a clapper. Nonetheless, this occurrence is not considered to be a usual one in the course of everyday Christian life; there is some kind of divine intervention into the course of everyday life to create such an event. From Betha Kieran ("The Life of St. Kieran") we have the following:

...Said Patrick to St. Kieran: 'Precede me into Ireland; and in the marching of her northern with her southern part, in her central point, thou shalt find a well. At such well (the name of which is Uaran) build thou a monastery'... Kieran answered and said: 'Impart to me the spot where the well is.' Patrick said to him:

'The Lord will be with thee: go thou but straight before thee; take to thee first my little bell, which until thou reach the well that we have mentioned shall be speechless; but when thou attainest to it the little bell will with a clear melodious voice speak out...' Kieran's bell was without uttering until he came to the place where was the well of which Patrick spoke: when he had reached it, straight away the little bell spoke with a bright, clear voice...

(See Collection Ref. No. 156)

Another type of unusual situation involving a bell in everyday life, yet with Otherworld influence, is from Betha Colmain ("The Life of St. Colman"). Here, the Finnfaidech ("sweet-sounding bell") from Heaven materializes:

...and he had no bell with him to sound the summons for hearing his Mass, so that then the Finnfaidech (sweet-sounding bell) of Colman mac Luachan was sent down to him from Heaven, and the mark of its rim is still there in the stone. So the bell was struck by them...

(See Collection Ref. No. 141)

For a similar reference from the Collection which addresses the issue of the sudden materialization of a bell from Heaven to assist a saint--here St. Declan of Ardmore--please see number 152.

The Tripartite Life of Patrick also presents the reader with an example of the power of a saint's bell. Here, a birch tree grows through the handle of the bell of St. Patrick, called the Bethachan:

...Patrick flings his handbell under a thick brake there. A birch (bethe) grows through its handle. It is this that Dicuill found, the Bethachan, Patrick's bell, a little bell of iron, which is now in the Oratory of Dicuill...

(See Collection Ref. No. 169)



The power of the Bethechan after St. Patrick's death is exemplified in the following reference, where it is portrayed as still having significant power at Doomsday:

...Then Patrick went till he was bidding at Achad Fobair, and there he celebrated Easter. There are, moreover, keepers belonging to Patrick's household alive in Ireland still. There is a man from him in Cruachan Aigle--they hear the voice of his bell and he is not found...

(See Collection Ref. No. 167)

The power of a saint's bell to occasionally cause supernatural events to occur as part of a curse is shown in this episode from Cain Adamnain ("The Law of Adamnan"), where St. Adamnan's bell is used to curse kings who tried to kill him as they did not want to convert to Christianity:

...Adamnan took no sword with him to the battle, but the Bell of Adamnan's Wrath, to wit, the little bell of Adamnan's altar-table. It is then Adamnan spoke these words: `I strike this little bell by the side of Lettir on purpose...God's curse on Elodach, the chief of Femen of the Deissi...I strike a bell against Cellach of Carman, that he may be in the earth before a year's end...The bell of truly miraculous Adamnan has made desolate many kings...

(See Collection Ref. No. 135)

Likewise, from Betha Fechin Febair ("The Life of St. Fechin of Febair") we have an example of a king's horses and herds were killed by the power of St. Fechin's bell:

...Of a time when Fechin was learning with Presbyter Naithi in Achad Conairi, he is set one day to keep the meadow lest it should be stript bare by strangers' cattle. Thereafter the king's horses and herds are put into it in spite of Fechin. Fechin cursed them, and struck his bell at them, so that they found death therewith. When the king heard that, he comes before Fechin, and flung him-

self on his knees, and sought forgiveness of his sins. Fechin gives him absolution, and brought his horses and his herds back to life; and God's name and Fechin's were magnified by that miracle...

(See Collection Ref. No. 153)

For other references from the Collection which illustrate the power of a saint's bell as part of a curse, please see numbers 60, 150 and 151.

Sometimes a saint's bell is portrayed as having a central role in banishing demons, i.e., as part of an exorcism. In the following example, St. Columcille is taught by an angel how to banish demons with his bell, named the Dub duaibsech:

...And an angel gave him a round grey stone and told him to throw it at the demons and that both they and the fog should flee before it. And he told him to throw his own bell, namely the Dub duaibsech, at them likewise. And Columb Cille did as the angel taught him so that the whole land was yielded to it from the fog, and the devils fled before him to a boulder that was out in the ocean abreast of the western headland of that country. And Columb Cille cast that stone which the angel had given him and his own bell, to the the Dub duaibsech, at them...

(See Collection Ref. No. 149)

For other references which focus on the power of a saint's bell to exorcise demons, please see numbers 148 and 165.

Occasionally, but certainly not always, the human voice is portrayed in everyday life experience with some kind of Otherworld influence(s) occurring. Usually this is portrayed as being a part of a chant or incantation of some type.

For instances where the human voice is used as an instrument of magical incantation or spell, see reference numbers: 34 (Cu Roi chants a protective spell on his home from abroad); 62 (Mongan is

on the receiving end of a fili's curse); 146 (St. Columcille chants a hymn to protect a grove of trees from fire); 157 (St. Lasair chants psalms and is miraculously protected from a fire); and number 165 (St. Patrick chants maledictive psalms at demonic black birds).

### Illustratory Comparative Material:

The literature of other cultures also illustrates musical instruments in an everyday context, yet with Otherworld influence(s). The English and Scottish Popular Ballads by F.J. Child has a song entitled "The Twa Sisters", in which we encounter a harp that "accuses" someone of a crime, as it was made out of the bones of the victim. In the ballad, a young maiden, wooed by a knight, is drowned by her jealous elder sister. Her body is found by a harper, who, in the paraphrasing of Sanger and Kinnaird, "in some versions makes a harp from her bones; in others he uses her finger bones for tuning-pins; and, in some, strings his harp with locks of her golden hair. At a feast, which is sometimes the wedding feast of the elder sister and the knight, the harp then magically accuses the murderess:

...He leant his harp against a stane,  
And straught it began to play its lane.

O yonder sits my faither the king  
And yonder sits my mither the queen.

And yonder sits by brother Hugh  
And by him my William, sweet and true.

And the lasten tune that the harp did play  
Was 'Wae tae my sister, wha drooned me.' (21)

This motif of the supernatural power of a harp to reveal a secret is reminiscent of the early Irish example from the Collection where a harp reveals, at the most inopportune time, that the king has horse's ears.

The Welsh tale Culhwch and Olwen also addresses the issue of a supernatural harp. Here, the Chief Giant Ysbaddaden asks who it is that has come to seek his daughter. Culhwch son of Cilydd responds that it is he, and then Ysbaddaden proceeds to a very long incredulous list of demands, one of which is to locate the magic harp of Teirtu, an extremely difficult task, yet Culhwch claims that for him, it would be easy. The encounter is as follows:

...[Ysbaddaden]: `Though thou get that, there is that thou wilt not get. The harp of Teirtu to entertain me on that night. When a man pleases, it will play of itself; when one would have it so, it will be silent. He [Teirtu] will not give it of his own free will, nor canst thou compel him.' [Culhwch]: `It is easy for me to get that, though thou think it is not easy.'...(22)

Next, Ysbaddaden requests that Culhwch find "the birds of Rhiannon, they that wake the dead and lull the living to sleep, must I have to entertain me on that night." (23)

The characteristics of the harp of Teirtu--an instrument that plays by itself, when it suits its owner--is somewhat similar to the early Irish reference to the Dagda summoning his special harp from the wall, an instrument that only responds to his call. [See Coll. Ref. No. 3] Clearly, such instruments are not usual in the course of everyday life, as these tales also seem to imply.

#### IV) INSTRUMENTS IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Everyday life presents us with many examples of instruments and their use, often as part of major community fairs or festivals. We will now take a look at those references from the Collection which specifically mention certain musical instruments as part of mundane, everyday life, and which have no supernatural influence(s) described at all. From the famous poem entitled "Carmun", part of the Dindshenchas, the place-lore of early Ireland, several musical instruments are noted at the Carmun fair:

...Pipes, (pipai), fiddles, (fidli), gleemen, (fir cengail),  
bones-players (cnamfir), and bag-pipers, (cuslennaig),  
a crowd hideous, noisy, profane,  
shriekers and shouters...  
...Tales of death and slaughter,  
strains of music (cheoil)...

(See Collection Ref. No. 12)

...These are the Fair's great privileges: trumpets, (stuic),  
harps, (cruitti), (cuirn chroes-tholla) hollow-throated horns,  
pipers, (cuisig), timpanists (timpaig) unwearied,  
poets and meek musicians (faen-chliara)...

(See Collection Ref. No. 13)

From the above example, we have mention of pipai (pipes),  
fidli (fiddles), cruitti (harps), cuslennaig (bagpipers), cnam-fir  
(bones-players) stuic (trumpets), cuirn (horns), timpaig (timpani),  
and singers and poets.

The harp, (crot or cruit), is frequently mentioned in many situations in everyday life, as might be expected. The court of a king was a frequent context in which harpers might play, as with the following example from Accalam na Senorach ("The Colloquy with the Ancient Men"), where the very aged Fianna warrior Caeilte says to St. Patrick:

...Three sorts of music, and O music of three kinds,  
that comely kings enjoyed! Music of harps, (crot)  
melody of timpan, (timpan) [and the] humming (dord)  
of Trogan's son Fer-tuinne...

(See Collection Ref. No. 96)

For references from the Collection that portray the use of the cruit (harp) in some way as part of everyday life in a primal context, please see reference numbers: 8, 14, 43, 47, 51, 59, 63, 96, 144. As most of these references have already been highlighted in full elsewhere, (in the "Effects" and "Performers" chapters), they are only listed here for cross-reference purposes relating to the harp as an instrument in a chiefly primal context.

For references referring to the timpan used in everyday life in a primal context, see numbers 13 and 96.

For references referring to the fidli (fiddle) in everyday life experience, see numbers 12 and 13.

For reference that mention bagpipers (cuslennach), pipes, (pipai), or the other Old Irish term meaning pipe, (buinne), see numbers 3, 8, 12, 13, 36, 63.

For reference to trumpets, (stuic), see number 13; for a reference to the cnamfir ("men of the bones", i.e., "bone-players"), see number 12.

For those references to horns, (cuirn) or horn-players, (cornairib), please see numbers 8, 13, 36, 45, 63.

The bell (cloc or clucin) as an instrument in everyday life in a battle context occurs in the following reference from Mesca Ulad ("The Intoxication of the Ulstermen"):

...One man is among them, with a close-shorn bristly

poll; great eyes in his head, all white and bulging; he has a smooth blue Ethiopian face. A cloak of striped cloth is gathered about him; a hook of brass is in his cloak above his front; a long crook of bronze is in his hand. He has with him a sweet-sounding little bell (clucin ceolbind)...

(See Collection Ref. No. 37)

For other references to a bell as part of Christian everyday life experience, see numbers 60 (bishop puts bells on top of Muirchertach's grave) and 105 (hermit's bell).

Vocal music, as either singing or chanting, occurs fairly frequently as part of everyday life experience in this literature from early medieval Ireland. The singing of the guests at the late night party of nobleman Buchet, (Ref. No. 59), and the beautiful singing of the young St. Colman as a boy (Ref. No. 145) all illustrate singing and its perceived power in everyday life. For all such references to vocal music in everyday, mundane life from the Collection, please see reference numbers: 11, 12, 25, 35, 40, 50, 59, 96, 131, 145, 160, 161, 164.

The "instruments" of the natural elements are mentioned in much of the monastic hermit poetry, as a celebration of all of God's creation. Much of these speak of the "music of the pines" or the "music" of the birds' singing, for example. As many of these have been fully highlighted elsewhere, they are merely listed here for cross-reference purposes; please see Collection reference numbers: 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133.

Insects are sometimes mentioned as having a "music" of their

own, especially that of the fly and its buzzing sounds; please see reference numbers 10 (Etain, as a scarlet fly, entertains Midir); and 162 (St. Moling mourns the death of his pet fly and its music).

Chariot wheels are portrayed as sounding in harmony, in the following reference from Serqlige Con Culainn ("The Wasting Sickness of Cuchulainn"), where the sidhe woman Fand describes the character of Cuchulainn:

...No sidhe music is the strain  
which sounds for him,  
The stain of blood is upon him.  
He chants a drone (cronan) above the chariot-frame,  
the wheels of his chariot sound in harmony.

(See Collection Ref. No. 40)

The music of chariots is mentioned in the context of the Taltiu fair in this example from the Dindshenchas:

...A fair with gold, with silver,  
with games, with music of chariots...

(See Collection Ref. No. 30)

The "music" of the swords in battle is illustrated in the following example from Cath Maige Rath ("The Battle of Moira"):

...'Hateful to me now,' said the spy, 'is the varied  
music (ceol) I hear throughout the battle, the  
swish of the swords in the hands of heroes...

(See Collection Ref. No. 64)

For all of the references from the Collection which mention the music of the swords in battle, see numbers: 2, 32, 49, 64.

A unique category in this Collection are those references that compare one instrument to another, usually the human voice as compared to the sweet music of harps, etc. Such Comparative references seem to indicate something about how the early Irish



might have thought about music. Such a comparison is made in Togail  
bruidne Da Derga ("The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel"):

...Sweeter the music of that sword than the sweet sound of  
the golden pipes that drone in the royal house...

(See Collection Ref. No. 49)

The voices of citizens in the well-run kingdom of Conaire are  
here compared to the sweet strings of harps:

...and such abundance of good will that no one slew another  
in Erin during his [Conaire's] reign. And to every one  
in Erin his fellow's voice seemed as sweet as the strings  
of a chrot (harp)... (See Collection Ref. No. 50)

The term a "hero of a hundred songs" is made in reference to  
the great deeds of the warrior Conall, in this example from the  
poem entitled "Mag Luirg" from the Dindshenchas:

...From this deed at Cuan Cairn  
the plain received its great name:  
the Cherishing of Conall, hero of a hundred songs,  
is well-known to me without obscurity...

(See Collection Ref. No. 26)

For all references that compare one instrument, often the  
human voice, to another, please see Collection reference numbers:  
8, 26, 31, 49, 50, 53, 57, 61, 128, 133, 144, 145, 160.

#### Illustratory Comparative Material:

Musical instruments are mentioned in many contexts in world  
literature regarding their use in everyday life. From Japanese  
tradition we have the following extract from a tale involving two  
instruments, the koto, a stringed instrument like a dulcimer, and  
a flute. Here, a young lady is puzzled by a surprise flute  
accompaniment to her music on the koto; eventually, she finds out

it is a young nobleman and they fall in love:

...Fujiwara Toyomitsu was the governor of the province of Uzen about 1,200 years ago, during the reign of Emperor Mommu. He had a daughter named Akoya who was endowed with talent and beauty. One autumn evening as she was playing a koto the faint sound of a flute was heard outside, accompanying the tune of her koto. Its tone was sweet and charming and it blended in harmony with the tune of the lady's koto in the serenity of the late autumn night. The player of the flute was a noble young man in a green dress. His name was Natori Taro, and he lived at the foot of Mt. Chitose. The two young people fell in love with each other...(24)

Probably some of the best known references to the lyre in everyday life in ancient western culture, are those from the Iliad and the Odyssey of Homer. In the Odyssey the lyre is mentioned frequently; the following example illustrates a bard playing music for guests at a banquet:

...The steward returned with a very splendid lyre for Phemius, whose hap it was to play the bard for them, under compulsion. He ran his hands over the strings, plucking out an exquisite air...(25)

### Conclusion

The instruments mentioned in the references from this Collection have been presented in three major categories: 1) those shown to be in a purely Otherworld dimension; 2) those presented in the context of everyday life, yet with some Otherworldly influence(s) at least occasionally; and 3) those references that mention the use of musical instruments in a normal, mundane, everyday life capacity. We will now take a look at what, if anything, they say about how the early Irish might have viewed musical instruments.

Many of the instruments listed are those which we, today, with our modern-day perception, would clearly consider a musical instrument--a harp, a fiddle, a bell, a bagpipe, etc. However, from this Collection we have a situation where it appears that certain inanimate objects, such as swords in battle [Ref. Nos. 2, 32, 49, 64] or chariot wheets [Ref. Nos. 30, 40] are described as having some kind of inherent instrumentality of their own. Insects, mainly the fly, are described as having a music of their own, from the description of Etain as a fly [Ref. No. 10] to the beloved pet fly of St. Moling. [Ref. No. 162] The essential question here of course is whether the early Irish viewed swords, chariot wheels or flies as instruments? As an instrument is something that is played by a performer, the vexing question the worldview of the early Irish presents our modern minds with, is what exactly is a musical instrument? What are the criteria that determine whether or not something is an instrument, played by a musician? What are we to do with a description of a harp that plays by itself and reveals a secret? [Ref. No. 52] It appears as though the viewpoint of the early Irish of what can make music, i.e., be an instrument, is much broader than our view today. The very definition of "instrument", using our typical modern view, is challenged.

From the early medieval Irish hermit poetry references, we seem to encounter a viewpoint or perspective of the natural elements themselves as being "instruments" of God as part of everyday life experience. Chief among these are water and trees.

The hermit poetry describes "the music of the pines" or the "music" of a woodland [Ref. Nos. 102, 103, 108, 116, 123, 125, 129]. From the Collection references to a purely supernatural Otherworld, be it presented in an overtly primal or Christian context, we also have the imagery of a tree or a musical branch as having a music of its own, an instrument of a supernatural, unknown performer. [Ref. Nos. 68: Bran sees a silver musical branch materialize out of nowhere; 56: King Cormac sees a musical silver branch in tir tairngiri; 110 and 42: Loeg reports back to Cuchulainn about a musical tree in mag mell; 78: music of wind and trees on an island paradise; 21 and 23: a king's son sees a shining musical tree in a dream].

Also from the hermit poetry references, we have what appears to be a viewpoint that water, especially waterfalls or fountains, have an inherent instrumentality of their own. The descriptions comment on the psalm-pure psalms of where a river meets the sea [Ref. No. 113] or of the delightful cascades of a river [Ref. No. 102] as part of everyday life experience. From the Collection references to a purely supernatural Otherworld, no matter what the context, we also have the imagery of water being portrayed as having an inherent instrumentality all its own, of it being used as a musical instrument by a supernatural, unknown performer. [Ref. No. 88: waters of Assaroe, where the music of tir tairngiri can be heard; 29: the seven musical streams of the underwater Well of Connla; 57: the five melodious streams from a shining fountain in tir tairngiri as heard by King Cormac].

Certain instruments have references in all three categories--the purely supernatural, the everyday with some Otherworld influence, and the mundane, everyday. Probably the most prominent in this aspect is the human voice itself--in everyday life, we have seen the power of the singing of the young St. Colman (No. 145) and the description of the singing at the celebration by the guests at Buchet's House (No. 59). [For a further detailed listing of all references to the voice in everyday life contexts, see page 21.] In category 2 we have a rather unique situation where the voice is usually portrayed as a vocal instrument to chant an incantation or spell, or, to bless or curse. [Ref. No. 34: Munster nobleman Cu Roi chants a protective spell around his stronghold while away abroad; 62: Mongan is on the receiving end of a fili's curse; 146: St. Columcille chants psalms to protect a beloved groves of trees; 157: St. Lasair chants psalms and is miraculously protected from a monastery fire; 165: St. Patrick chants maledictive psalms at demonic black birds]. In category 1 we have a range of situations, such as the singing of the leech-doctors of the Tuatha de Danann, the singing of saints and angels in Heaven, or the singing of a severed head. As these also could be called performers, they will only be listed here for research cross-reference purposes, as the voice is also a musical instrument. [The following references all pertain to singing: Ref. Nos.: 6: leech-doctors; 9, 16, 17, 46, 58, 67, 74, 75, 88, 98: various sidhe singers; 27 and 83: mermaids; 63: severed head; 77, 134, 138, 143, 154, 171, 172: singing in the Christian Heaven; 7: sirens on an island; 65, 66, 73: sidhe beings

sing on island paradise; 28, 38, 41, 120: sidhe birds in primal otherworld; 65, 76, 79, 82, 134, 137, 151, 158, 159, 173: birds portrayed in Christian Heaven.]

We also see references from this Collection where the human voice itself, an instrument, is compared to the sound of other instruments like harps or lutes. Some examples often imply a value judgment or belief on the part of the early Irish that something that they approved of or thought positive is called "melodious"; conversely, something dangerous, threatening, or disliked, is "unmelodious". Most of these simply state that someone's voice is "as sweet as" the strings of harps, etc. [See Ref. Nos. 8, 26, 31, 49, 50, 53, 57, 61, 128, 133, 144, 145, 160.]

Bells as an instrument occur in all three categories. In everyday, mundane life, for example, we have a portrayal of a "sweet little bell" on a warrior's uniform [Ref. No. 37], or mention of a hermit's bell in monastic life. [Ref. No. 105] Occasionally in everyday life experience, something unusual occurs regarding the bell--it sounds of its own accord, or assists a saint in an exorcism. [see Ref. Nos. 140, 141, 148, 149, 152, 156, 165, 167, 169]. In a purely supernatural context, we have one example where St. Columcille tells a man that in Heaven, there are bells that ring of themselves every canonical hour. [Ref. No. 151].

Harps are mentioned in everyday life experience in a general way in Ref. Nos. 8, 14, 43, 47, 51, 59, 63, 96, 144. One example has an unusual occurrence, where a harp reveals a secret; [Ref. No. 52]; and one other fits the purely supernatural category, where the

dagda chants to a harp on the wall, and it responds to him. [Ref. No. 3]. Other instruments are mentioned primarily in mundane, everyday contexts, such as fiddles, bagpipes, or horns.

It appears that the early Irish viewpoint about the power of the bell to exorcise demons is echoed in the writings from the first and second centuries, where it was believed "that demons could not endure noise...or, above all, the sound of gongs and bells. This superstition was so deeply rooted that Christian mothers also hung little bells around their children's necks and on their wrists to keep away the harmful influence of the demons. Chrysostom had to point out with great severity that only the protection which came from the Cross could keep the children from harm..." (26) Ironically, it seems as though the early Irish church might disagree with Chrysostom, as the frequent use of the bell in monastic life, and the primary focus of it in portrayals of a saint's power to exorcise demons, seem to indicate that they "reclaimed" this very old belief about the power of bells.

Once more, under Instruments, we see a continuity across what would otherwise seem the distinct areas of the otherworldly and the mundane, the supernatural and the natural, and indeed across the divide between overtly Christian and overtly primal contexts. By appearing now as 1) otherworldly, 2) as this-worldly, but with some otherworldly influence(s) attached, and 3) as this-worldly with its own natural power, a single type of instrument, such as the harp, for example, can convey through this complex of literary

references, a sense of the unbroken line that joins the sacred and the profane so that the former can seem both the source, and the goal, of the latter.



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EFFECTS OF MUSIC IN THE LITERATURE OF EARLY MEDIEVAL IRELAND

The effects of music described in the literature of early medieval Ireland range from great appreciation of it in everyday life to often quite dramatic descriptions of the effects of music on the listener(s). Such effects upon the listener are often portrayed as great joy or ecstasy, melancholy or grief, a trance-like sleep state, death or destruction, healing, peace or relaxation, for example. Such descriptions of the effects of music occur throughout this literature, be it described in an overtly primal or Christian context, or in an everyday or Otherworld context.

The effects of music as portrayed in this literature seem to be a matter with which the early Irish were especially concerned, as they clearly felt such effects were quite noticeable and important to them; so much so that they consistently included such descriptions of the effects of music in their tales, folklore, saint's lives, Christian hermit poetry, place-lore, etc.

In the analysis of the material from the Collection which follows, we will look in turn at the various effects of the music on the listener(s), as described in this literature. The material is thus organized into two major categories: 1) The supernatural effects of music; and 2) the effects of music in everyday, mundane life.

These two categories we shall see placed side by side, and one may notice many of the same types of effects listed in each of the two categories--i.e., joy or ecstasy, melancholy, healing, etc.

However, one may also notice that the more extreme or dramatic the effects of the music described are on the listener(s), the more likely it is to be portrayed in a supernatural context--be it in an overtly primal or Christian context. It seems as though the degree of supernatural influence(s) tends to determine the degree of how "dramatic" the effect on the listener is. So, in those references in which the music is portrayed as being heard directly in an Otherworld dimension of some type, be it the Christian Heaven or the primal Otherworld, the effects are often portrayed as rather extreme, as compared to those characteristic of everyday, mundane life. Thus, for example, the great appreciation and joy that the effects of music are described as having on a Christian hermit monk in his everyday monastic life are portrayed as much less dramatic than the indescribable ecstatic joy of music in God's Heaven. Correspondingly, the level of effect achieved would indicate the otherworldly rather than mundane source or nature of the music. And, of course, in this as in other chapters the divisions are far from clear cut, and can easily give way to impressions of continuity.

### Introduction:

But first I should like to say a few words about how a primal society such as that portrayed in many of these references might have viewed music and its effects as they felt them to be. Many of the references in this Collection reflect a different world-view than that of our modern-day, Cartesian, materialistic

philosophy--the world-view of the early Irish period. Thus, when the effects of music are described, one will rarely see them described as merely "beautiful" or "haunting", etc., as a modern-day concert-goer might reflect after hearing a given piece of music. Often, the effects of the music are portrayed as affecting the individual(s) in the audience in quite a dramatic manner--beyond mere "commentary" on the musical performance itself--so that one must consider their world-view and the possible role of music in it, in order to do the analysis of this Collection justice.

Music has always been important to humanity; and musicologist A.P. Merriam in The Anthropology of Music, states that "there is probably no other human cultural activity which is so all-pervasive and which reaches into, shapes, and often controls so much of human behavior." (1) Of particular interest to the early Irish period is the question of how they might have perceived the role of music and its effects in their culture. Merriam also addresses the issue of how a primal society might have viewed the role of music, taking into account that much important knowledge in primal cultures is commonly stored in heroic tales, sagas, poetry, place-lore or songs (2)--precisely the sort of literature many of the references in this chapter come from. Ethnomusicologist Nettl believes that such primal societies did not necessarily view music as an abstract entity, as we do in our modern, Western world-view:

...The concept of music as "beautiful" seems to be generally undeveloped...Informants speak of songs as being "good". No doubt the prevailing functionality of music is responsible for this designation, for beauty is an end in itself, while "good" implies usefulness for a specific purpose: a

song may be good for curing, good for dancing, etc. ...some informants describe songs as "powerful", probably because the songs have some sort of supernatural function...(3)

Dr. Breandan O'Madagain also comments on how the early Irish may have possibly viewed music and its effects in their society:

...And so music was a supernatural instrument of power, as well as being universally the medium for communication with the supernatural. The Irish and Scottish Gaelic tradition has clear echoes of such ideas. The gods, later the Si, were closely associated with music and its origin, and the hallmark of their music was its transcendant beauty. They sometimes favoured mortals with the gift of music, usually instrumental, but sometimes vocal...(4)

So, it appears that the early Irish world-view considered that music was--or could be--a "vehicle" for a divine or supernatural influence, and could therefore affect the listener(s) accordingly. This seems to be borne out in one sterling example cited earlier in the Performers chapter, in which St. Patrick and his clergy, after hearing what is termed "fairy music" from a supernatural harper, all fell into a trance-like sleep state to the music in spite of themselves--a rather dramatic effect. Upon awakening, they admit the music's great effect on them, and begin a lively debate about such music and its value, with St. Patrick as the Christian spokesman implicitly acknowledging the supernatural power(s) of the effects of the music by cautioning the clergy about becoming "inordinately addicted to it". [See Collection Ref. No. 86]

Bearing this issue in mind of how a primal society like that of early Ireland might have viewed music and its perceived effects on them, we will now look at those references that illustrate the

supernatural effects of music.

# I): SUPERNATURAL EFFECTS OF MUSIC

A). Regarding the effects of music from the references in this Collection we have quite a number that include supernatural effect(s) of the music on the listener in some way.

## 1): The Three Strains: "suantraigi", "genntraig", "golltraigi"

So important are the three strains and the corresponding categories of effects that a story of their origin is told in the Tain bo Fraich, ("The Cattle Raid of Fraich"), where musicians play for the court of king Ailill:

...`Let thy harpers play to us,' said Ailill to Fraich;  
 `Let them play, in sooth,' said Fraich. They had harp-bags of otter-skins covering them, with red ornament overworked with gold and silver. Deer-skin around them in the middle as white as snow, with dark grey spots in the center. Coverings of linen, white as the plumage of swans around the strings. Harps of gold and silver and white bronze with figures of serpents and birds and hounds on them. Those figures were of gold and silver. When those strings moved, those figures used to turn around the men. [the harpers]. They played to them, then, so that twelve men of their household died of weeping and sadness. Fair and melodious were these three, and they were Uaithne's fair ones. The famous three were brothers. Goltraiges, Gentraiges, Suantraiges. Boand of the fairies was their mother. It is from the music played by Uaithne, the Dagda's harper, that the three are named. When the woman was in travail it seemed to be like weeping and sorrow at first with the sharpness of the pangs; then, in the middle, it was laughter and gladness that he played on account of her elation because of the two sons; it was sleep and gentleness for the last son on account of the heaviness of the birth, so that from it a third of the music was named. Boand then awoke from the sleep. `Accept,' she said, `your three sons, O passionate Uaithne, for there are Suantraide, Gentraide, and Goltraide for cattle and for women who shall bring forth under Medb and Ailill. Men will die on hearing the music.' They ceased playing then in

the royal house...

[See Collection Ref. No. 44]

In this general account the "three strains" and their effects have supernatural origins attributed by the story itself:

Gentraide, for a joyful strain, Goltraide, for a melancholy strain, and Suantraide for a sleep strain. This "three strains" motif and its supernatural origin has become a myth of its own in Irish folklore.

The following example from Cath Maige Tuired II ("The Second Battle of Mag Tured") illustrates Lugh, a legendary god of early Ireland, playing the three strains:

'Let a harp be played for us,' said the hosts. So the warrior Lugh played a sleep-strain for the hosts and for the king the first night. He cast them into sleep from that hour to the same time on the following day. He played a wail-strain, so that they were crying and lamenting. He played a laugh-strain, so that they were in merriment and joyance.

[See Collection Ref. No. 4]

A further example from the Collection of the three strains and their effects is from Comracc Con Culainn re Senbecc ("Combat of Cuchulainn with Senbecc"). Cuchulainn, legendary hero of early Ireland, performs the feat of nine heroes at the river Boyne and encounters a wee man with a harp:

...'What little thing is that with thee?' asked Cuchulaind. 'A small harp,' said Senbecc, 'and shall I play it to thee?' 'I am pleased,' said Cuchulaind. Then he ran his fingers over it, in such wise that Cuchulaind kept shedding tears at the melancholy tune. Then he played the merry tune, and Cuchulaind kept laughing continually. He played the sleepy tune, and Cuchulaind was in sleep and continuous slumber from one hour to the other...

[See Collection Ref. No. 33]



In summary, one may note that in each of these general accounts of the three main effects, a supernatural origin for the music is implied by the stories themselves; the effects also are rather dramatic. For all of the references in this literature which refer to the "three strains" specifically, please see Collection reference numbers: 3, 4, 33, 44, 54.

For more specific accounts of effects of music on the listener, with some inevitable repetition of this general account of the three strains, the following categories are offered.

2): Trance-like sleep effect(s) and side effects: ["Suantraigi"]:

A frequently described effect of the music in this literature is that of causing the listener(s) to "fall asleep", i.e., to enter some type of altered state of consciousness, often for a period of days, as a direct result of hearing the music. One gets the distinct impression that the listener cannot help himself, in spite of his efforts to stay in the state of so-called normal or everyday consciousness. The literature of the early Irish period includes numerous references to the power of music to put the listener into a trance-like state of sleep, which is portrayed as having a supernatural effect.

The following example from Aislinge Oenguso, ("The Dream of Oengus"), a ninth-century tale, shows such an effect upon king Oengus, who had a dream one night in which an unknown woman came to him and played music to him, after which he fell asleep:

...he saw a lute in her hand, the sweetest that  
ever was; she played a tune to him, and he fell  
asleep at it...

[See Collection Ref. No. 1]

A far cry from being a simple lullaby, or a merely relaxing effect, king Oengus then becomes obsessively "haunted" by this dream, which repeats itself, with its powerful musical effects to cause a trance-like sleep state.

From the Metrical Dindshenchas, the place-lore, we have a description of two fairy birds from the Otherworld singing to the host, putting them all to sleep:

...Bruide son of Derg from Cruachan Dubthire...and his foster-brother Luan son of Lugair son of Lugaid, used to visit Estiu in the shape of two birds, and sing a plaintive song to the host till it put them to sleep...Then they chanted to the host a song, shrill, wistful, unceasing, till all the host fell asleep at the song of the fairy folk...

[See Collection Ref. No. 28]

Often, the effects of the music to cause this special trance-like sleep state were seen to be quite dramatic--so much so that descriptions of it often include mention of the very sick, wounded men in battle, the depressed, the dying, women in travail of childbirth, and others in great pain or unfortunate circumstances as being soothed by being put into this trance-like sleep state. So the effects of the music to cause such a sleep state are usually connected with many other, often quite dramatic "side-effects".

One such example is from Accalam na Senorach ("Colloquy of the Ancient Men"), from the 15th c. Book of Lismore. Here, the legendary sidhe musician Cascorach puts St. Patrick and his clergy to sleep, with his music "the clergy had never heard":

...He took his timpan, tuned it, and on it played a volume of melody the equal of which for sweetness (saving only the dominical canon's harmony and laudation of Heaven's

King and Earth's) the clergy had never heard. Upon them fell a fit of slumber and of sleep and, when he had made an end with his minstrelsy, of Patrick he requested its recompense...

[See Collection Ref. No. 85]

Also from the Accalam na Senorach, we have an example of a talented sidhe musician given as a gift to the three sons of King Lugaid, and a description of the side-effects of the music:

...`A gift from me to them,' said Bodb Derg: `a good minstrel that I have (Fer-tuinne mac Trogain is his name) and though saws were being plied where there were women in sharpest pains of childbirth, and brave men that were wounded early in the day, nevertheless would such [people] sleep to the fitful melody that he makes.

[See Collection Ref. No. 89]

For other references to the power of music to put the listener(s) in a trance-like sleep state that are portrayed in a primal context, please see Collection references: 1, 18, 27, 28, 38, 46, 51, 56, 58, 65, 68, 84, 85, 87, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 109, 120.

From Immram Brain ("The Voyage of Bran"), the phenomenon of "unseen" or unknown mysterious music is portrayed as having the power to put the listener in a trance-like sleep state. Here, no musician is present at all--only the sound of sweet, unknown music. In this situation, Bran is in his royal courtyard one day, hears "unseen" music, and falls asleep to it despite himself, and is then transported to another dimension:

...One day, in the neighborhood of his stronghold, Bran went about alone, when he heard music behind him. As often as he looked back, `twas still behind him, the music was. At last he fell asleep at the music, such was its sweetness. When he awoke from his sleep, he saw close by him a branch of silver with white blossoms, nor was it easy to distinguish its bloom from that branch. Then Bran took the branch in his

hand to his royal house...[then] they saw a woman in  
strange raiment...[who sings to them]...

[See Collection Ref. No. 68]

Another example of a mysterious, unseen source of music and its sleep-like effects is from the tale Immram Curaig Maile Duin ("The Voyage of Mael Duin"). Mael Duin and his clergy encounter an island out at sea, the home of a noble sidhe woman's fort and the brazen net at its entrance:

...She went from them and closed the noble pleasant fort:  
her net, manifesting mighty power, chanted good  
harmonious music.

...Her musical choir lulled them to sleep, as had been  
enjoined. Next day she came to them--a woman unshamed.

...Thus they were, in the same condition, till the third  
day; the noble woman's music used to play for them,  
but no banqueting hall was seen...

[See Collection Ref. No. 109]

Like Bran, such music emanating from rather mysterious sources seems to transport Mael Duin and his clergy into another dimension, causing sleep to come upon them, a type of trance-like state of consciousness that is different from everyday awareness.

Another sleep-like effect is where one takes some kind of emergency preventative measures to avoid falling into a trance-like sleep state at listening to the music. To help avoid this unusually powerful supernatural effect of the music, mortals and immortals alike in this literature resort to such measures as putting melted wax in their ears, putting a sharp tip of a sword to one's forehead to stay awake, putting fingers in one's ears, and simply running away as fast as humanly possible from the music.

Sometimes such measures are taken as part of warfare, for

example, to cause the enemy to fall asleep by using a harpist to cause a deceptive sleep while one's own side escapes unharmed. Or, harp music is used to aid a seduction. Such an example is the following reference showing harpist Craiphtine in such a role; it is from the tale Orgain Denna Rig ("The Destruction of Dind Rig") from the cycle of king Labraid:

...Scoriath had a daughter, whose name was Moriath. They were guarding her carefully, for no husband fit for her had been found at once. Her mother was keeping her. The mother's two eyes never slept at the same time, for one of the two was watching her daughter... [however] the damsel loved Labraid. There was a plan between her and him. Scoriath held a great feast for the Men of Morca. This is the plan they made--after the drinking, Craiphtine [the harpist] should play the slumber-strain, so that her mother should fall asleep and Labraid should reach the chamber. Now that came to pass. Craiphtine hid not his harp that night, and the loving couple came together... [Later in the text:]...Then said Ferchetne [to the mother]: 'The lute hid no music from Craiphtine's harp till he cast a death-sleep on the hosts... Labraid foregathered with her after you had been lulled by Craiphtine's music.' [Later]:...`...until they reached Dind Rig for the first destruction... And they were unable to destroy it until the warriors outside made a deceptive plan, namely, that Craiphtine should go on the rampart of the fortress to play the slumber-strain to the host within, so that it might be overturned, and that the host outside should put their faces to the ground and their fingers in their ears that they might not hear the playing. So that was done there, and the men inside fell asleep, and the fortress was captured...Now Moriath was on that hosting. She did not deem it honourable to put her fingers into her ears at her own music, so that she lay asleep for three days, no one daring to move her...

[See Collection Ref. No. 51]

For the references that specifically describe various preventative measures taken to avoid falling asleep to music, please see Collection reference numbers: 7, 39, 51, 93, 98.

### 3) Joyful or Ecstatic effects: ["Genntraigí"]:

Probably the best known example of the effect of music causing such great joy that the audience "died of rapture", is that of Fraich and his hornplayers, from Tain bo Fraich ("The Cattle Raid of Fraich"). Fraich's horn-players here entertain king Ailill of Connacht with quite dramatic effects:

...Fraich's horn-players then went before him [i.e. Fraich] to the fort. They played so that thirty of Ailill's finest men died of rapture...

[See Collection Ref. No. 45]

Another very clear example of music causing such joy is from Cath Maige Mucrama ("The Battle of Mag Mucrama"), where Eogan and king Lughaid go to visit Art, son of Conn:

...as they came along the flat land by the river, in a clump of yew that overhung a certain rapid water they heard music. Back to [king] Oilíoll then they convey a wee man whom they had plucked out of the clump, in order that the king...should arbitrate between them: a man it was with three strings to his timpan. 'What is thy name?' they had asked, and 'Fer fi, son of Eogabal', he had answered. 'What has turned you back?' said Oilíoll. 'Quarreling we are about this man.' 'And what manner of man is this?' [asked king Oilíoll]. 'A good timpanist.' 'Let him play his music for us,' Oilíoll said; and the musician said, 'it shall be done.' ...he played the gentraighe, or laughter-strain, so forcing them all into a cachination such that it was barely but their very lungs became visible...

[See Collection Ref. No. 54]

Another example portraying the joyful effects of music comes from Immram Brain ("The Voyage of Bran"). Here, the effects of the music create an overall atmosphere of ecstatic, transcendent joy for the listener, as described by a mysterious sidhe woman to Bran:

...Colours of every hue gleam  
 throughout the soft familiar fields;  
 ranked around the music, they are  
 ever joyful in the plain south of Argadnel...

Riches, treasure of every colour  
 are in Ciuin, have they not been found?  
 Listening to sweet music,  
 drinking choicest wine.

Then they row to the bright stone  
 from which a hundred songs arise.  
 Through the long ages it sings to the host  
 a melody which is not sad,  
 the music swells up in choruses of hundreds,  
 They do not expect decay or death.

[See Collection Ref. Nos. 69-72]

For the references in the Collection which refer to the joyful or ecstatic effects of music, and where the dramatic nature of the effect(s) suggest an otherworldly influence, please see Collection references: 3, 4, 33, 44, 45, 54, 56, 66, 69, 71, 72.

#### 4) Melancholy or sad effects: ["Golltraighi"]:

From the tale Cath Maige Mucrama we have a sterling example of the tragically sad effects of the golltraighe strain. Here, king Ailill and his men listen to wee elfin harpist Fer fi:

...Then he played them the golltraighe, or weeping-strain,  
 reducing them to weep, wail, and bitterly to lament, till  
 it was besought of him that he would desist...

[See Collection Ref. No. 54]

Lament was seen by the early Irish as powerful, and involved chanting as well as a unique type of wailing song called "keening", which has continued right down to the present day in certain areas of Ireland. In our very early Irish period, however, the "Lament

of the Fairy Women" is portrayed in their literature as especially powerful with its melancholic effects upon the listener(s):

...they gave forth their cry, so that the people who were in the court were thrown prostrate. Hence it is that the musicians of Ireland have got the tune 'The Wail of the Fairy Women'...

[See Collection Ref. No. 46]

An especially powerful example of the melancholic effects of music upon the listener(s) occurs after a battle between the men of Leinster and the men of Munster, where the severed head of minstrel Donn Bo mourns the loss of king Fergal:

...Then the warrior heard a voice from a head in the wisp of rushes, and sweeter was that tune than the tunes of the world! Then the warrior went towards it. 'Do not come to me,' says the head to him. 'What? How art thou?' asks the warrior. 'I am Donn Bo,' says the head, 'and I have been pledged to make music tonight for my lord, that is, for Fergal, not by any means for

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Murchad. So do not annoy me.' 'Where is Fergal himself?' says the warrior. 'That is his body, the shining one, beyond thee,' says the head. [the warrior then takes the severed head of Donn Bo to where the Leinstermen were.] 'I have brought Donn Bo's head,' the warrior answered. 'Put it on the pillar yonder,' says Murchad... 'make minstrelsy for us, O Donn Bo, for the sake of God's Son, (to wit, Jesus Christ, into whose presence he had gone)...Then Donn Bo turned his face to the wall of the house so that it might be dark to him, and he raised his 'cruinsech' (?) on high so that it was sweeter than any melody on the earth's sward; and all the host were weeping and sad at the piteousness and misery of the music that he sang.

[See Collection Ref. No. 63]

Truly tragic effects, resulting in the suicide of a sidhe maiden by drowning in a river, occurred as a result of hearing the "doleful" music of the sidhe mounds is as follows:

.. among the streams of the eddying bays, she perished lamentably in her boat of fair bronze. The maiden with the white hands, bright and gold, never reached



the hero her lover: she leapt overboard, not mastered by a spell, but at the doleful music from the fairy mounds!...

[See Collection Ref. No. 18]

For the other examples which specifically state the sad or melancholic effects of music upon the listener see Collection references: 3, 4, 18, 33, 44, 46, 54, 63.

5) The effects of music to inspire or teach other musicians:

In certain instances, sidhe musicians inspire or teach other musicians with their enchanting music. One such example of this phenomenon from the early medieval period is from Accalam na Senorach ("The Colloquy of the Ancient Men"), where Finn mac Cumail and his five Fianna musicians claim to have learned "a fairy music" from wee man Cnu Deroil:

...We were, along with Finn, betwixt the crota and Slievenaman; when on the green bank near beside us there we heard a perfect music. To him we listened then--it lacked but little that the swelling music, well sustained, had lulled us all to sleep. Cumail's son Finn of Almha spoke out clearly then and said: 'whence comest thou, small man, that with a touch so smooth and deft playest the harp?' 'Out of Slievenaman come I'...Four fists were in the stature of the man, three in his harp so mild and dear: full-volumed was the sound of the soft delicate instrument, sweet the outpourings of his little harp. The five musicians of the Fianna were in a body brought to him; so that in those yonder parts from Cnu in gentle wise we learned a fairy music...

[See Collection Ref. No. 90]

Another such example is that of famed sidhe timpanist Cascorach, who inspires the Birds of Paradise to sing along with him in accompaniment. In this instance, there is no musician present at all, initially, only the waters of Assaroe in south-

western Ireland. Inspired by the mysterious "music" of these special waters, Cascorach then feels compelled to pick up his timpan and play for the Fianna, in accompaniment and harmony with the Birds of Paradise, who then directly join him in a harmonious duet. Thus it appears that not only mortals are affected by hearing the music, but here an immortal sidhe musician is also portrayed in this literature as being so inspired by the music of tir tairngiri ("The Land of Promise") from the waters of Assaroe, that it prompts him to take specific action himself. Thus,

...they heard a sound, a gush of music, draw near from the water of Assaroe: melody for sake of which one would have abandoned the whole world's various strains...`it was Uainebhuidhe out of the sidh of Dorn buidhe from Cleena's Wave in the south, and with her the birds of the Land of Promise, she being minstrel of that entire country. Now is her turn to visit this sidh, and every year she takes some other one.' [said the sidh people to Fianna member Caeilte]...[Then]...Cascorach handled his timpan, and to every piece that he played the birds sang him an accompaniment. `Many's the music we have heard,' Caeilte said, `but music so good as that, never.'...

[See Collection Ref. No. 88]

## 6) Healing or therapeutic effects:

Both physical and emotional healing effects are described in this literature as the result of hearing music. Cures from battle wounds, depression, pains of childbirth, etc. are often described. For example, in the tenth-century tale Cath Maige Tuired II, ("The Second Battle of Mag Tured"), the leech-doctors of the mythical Tuatha de Danann are here portrayed as not only healing wounded men in battle, but also as restoring the dead back to life through the

power of their chanting around the well of Slane:

...Diancecht and his two sons, even Octriuil and Miach, and his daughter Airmed, were singing spells over the well named Slane. Now their mortally wounded men were cast into it as soon as they would be slain. They were alive when they would come out. Their mortally wounded became whole through the might of the chant of the four leeches who were about the well...

[See Collection Ref. No. 6]

Emotional healing from depression and low morale is portrayed in the following reference from Echtra Taidg maic Cein ("The Adventure of Teigue son of Cian"). Here, Teigue and his men have been out at sea on a particularly long and exhausting voyage and are very tired, depressed, and demoralized. Then birds from tir tairngiri ("The Land of Promise") are sent to them by Cleena, minstrel of tir tairngiri to sing for them:

...and they saw enter to them...three birds...They eat an apple apiece, and warble melody sweet and harmonize, such that the sick would sleep to it. 'Those birds,' Cleena said, 'will go with you; they will give you guidance, will make you symphony and minstrelsy and until again ye reach Ireland, neither by land nor by sea shall sadness or grief afflict you.' [then:]... the birds struck up their chorus for them, whereat, for all they were so grieved and sad at renouncing that fruitful country out of which they were thus come, these modulations gladdened and soothed them that they became merry and of good courage all...

[See Collection Ref. No. 66]

In the following reference, music is used in a comparative manner to portray a general sense of overall well-being in the community:

...and such abundance of good will that no one slew another in Erin during his [Conaire's] reign. And to every one in Erin his fellow's voice seemed as sweet as the strings of lutes...[Later in text:] Each man deems the other's voice as melodious as the strings of lutes...

[See Collection Ref. No. 50]

### 7) Relaxing effects:

The effects of music as described as especially "sweet" or lovely is common in this literature. This is usually in reference to describing the music of sidhe musicians, or of music with some type of supernatural influence attached to it--for example, as part of a description of music in the Otherworld. Such music is portrayed in this literature as being calm, sweet, peaceful, and relaxing and causes similar effects in the listener(s). From Immram Brain, ("The Voyage of Bran"), the Otherworld is described as a comforting place, beneficial to the mortal individual:

...There is nothing rough or harsh, but sweet music  
striking on the ear...

[See Collection Ref. No. 70]

From Tochmarc Etaine ("The Wooing of Etaine") Midir, a man from the sidhe mounds, is separated from his love Etain, who was turned into a scarlet fly by the evil sorceress Fuamnach. He is portrayed here as lonely and feels great comfort and relaxation, however, from the "music" of the fly:

...Sweeter than pipes and harps and horns was the sound  
of her voice and the hum of her wings...

[See Collection Ref. No. 8]

For other references which show music as having the effect of bringing comfort, peace, tranquillity, or relaxation to the listener, please see Collection reference numbers: 8, 9, 10, 31, 35, 44, 56, 70.

### 8) Prosperous Effects:

In one example music is portrayed as contributing to the

overall wealth and prosperity of the community. In the following reference, the effects of the singing of the mythological singer Noisiu, of the legendary Sons of Uisliu, are portrayed:

...On one occasion, then, the aforementioned Noisiu was alone on the rampart of the earthwork (that is, of Emain) singing in a tenor\* voice. Melodious, however, was the tenor singing of the Sons of Uisliu. Each cow and each animal that heard it, two thirds surplus milk always was milked from them. Each person who heard it always had a sufficient peaceful disposition...

[See Collection Ref. No. 35]

[\*= Old Irish term "andord" is transl. as "tenor" by Vernon Hull]

#### 9) Dangerous or deadly effects:

At times music is portrayed as being positively dangerous to the listener(s). Aillen mac Midhna, the infamous sidhe musician who annually destroyed Tara, the centre of kingship in early Ireland, is portrayed as causing great destruction by first lulling everyone to sleep with his music, then emitting a deadly blast of fire:

...For it was Aillen mac Midhna of the Tuatha de Danann that out of the sidh Finnachaidh to the northward used to come to Tara: the manner of this coming being with a musical timpan in his hand, the which whenever any heard he would at once fall asleep. Then, all being lulled thus, out of his mouth Aillen would emit a blast of fire. It was on the solemn samhain-day he came in every year, played his timpan, and to the fairy music (ceol side) that he made all hands would fall asleep. With his breath he used to blow up the flame and so, during a three-and twenty years' spell, yearly burnt up Tara with all her gear...

[See Collection Ref. No. 91]

Hero Finn mac Cumail later took it upon himself to defend Tara, avoiding the inevitable effects of falling asleep to the

music by pitting the point of the magic spear of Fiacha mac Congha to his forehead, thus putting Aillen's destructions to an end.

The legendary sidhe pipers of Sid Breg who "will slay, but they cannot be slain", are another example of the deadly effects of music from the description reported by a spy of the "Room of the Pipers" from the tale Togail bruidne Da Derga ("Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel"), as follows:

...The Room of the Pipers: There I beheld a room with nine men in it. Hair fair and yellow was on them: they all are equally beautiful. Mantles speckled with colour they wore, and above them were nine bagpipes, four-tuned, ornamented. Enough light in the palace were the ornament on those four-tuned pipes. 'Liken thou them, O Fer rogain.' 'Easy for me to liken them,' says Fer rogain. 'Those are the nine pipers that came to Conaire out of the Elfmound of Bregia, because of the noble tales about him. These are their names: Bind, Robind, Riarend, Sibe, Dibe, Deichrind, Umall, Cumal, Ciallglind. They are the best pipers in the world. Nine enneads will fall before them, and a man for each of their weapons, and a man for each of themselves. And each of them will boast a victory over a king or a chief of the reavers. And they will escape from the Destruction; for a conflict with them will be a conflict with a shadow. They will slay, but they will not be slain, for they are out of an elfmound.

[See Collection Ref. No. 48]

In one other reference, from the Metrical Dindshenchas, a sidhe harper named Cliach played and sang "sweet melody", yet this very music drew a deadly dragon to that spot, where he was then killed:

...Here a man of the fairies made music,  
 Cliach of the harp sweet sounding,  
 he met a horror, amid the charm of his noble chant,  
 at his timely tryst with Conchend.

He was a year, among throngs of chiefs,  
without food and without sleep:  
while the Fairy host was making music,  
the grief of woman's might was urging him...

At the spot where he died of terror,  
Cliach sang sweet melody;  
there seized him there suddenly, not unprotected,  
the loathly dragon that dwells in this place...

[See Collection Ref. No. 16]

For other references from the Collection that deal with mainly destructive or deadly effects of music, see Collection reference numbers: 3, 16, 18, 39, 40, 44, 48, 62, 91, 92, 93.

10) Music as having the power to "summon" something or someone

Here we have a category of references in which the power of music itself is enough to "summon" a person, an animal, a group of people, etc. to the source of the music. In one instance cited earlier in the Performers chapter, a sidhe harper's music summoned a magic pig [See Ref. No. 24]. In the following example, taken from Immram Brain ("The Voyage of Bran"), a group of sidhe women is summoned to the plain where the birds from the Otherworld dimension of Imchiuin sing:

...If one has heard the sound of music,  
the song of the little birds from Imchiuin,  
a troop of women comes from the hill  
to the playing-field where it is...

[See Collection Ref. 73]

Cascorach's harp music is portrayed as having the power to summon, and subdue, wild wolves in the following example from Accalam na Senorach ("The Colloquy of the Ancient Men"):

...He got up early next day and went to the top of the cairn, and was playing and continually thrumming his lute till the clouds of evening came down. And as he was there, he saw three wolves coming towards him, and they lay down before him and listened to the music...[and they went away from him at the end of the day]... Cascorach came next day to the same cairn, and posted his followers around the cairn, and the wolves arrived at the cairn, and lay down on their forelegs listening to the music...

[See Collection Ref. No. 97]

For other references that address the issue of "summoning" something or someone to the source of the music, please see Collection reference numbers: 3, 16, 24, 73, 74.

Other cases of music "summoning" someone occur when a mortal individual, often a king, hears music and then is "transported" or "lured" to another dimension. A bit similar to the suantraigi sleep/trance category, this section focusses on the luring to or transporting to the Otherworld via music, whether sleep or trance is involved or not. For example, king Cormac visits tir tairngiri, the Land of Promise, lured there by the enchanting music of the silver branch of Manannan:

...A branch of silver with three golden apples was on [Manannan's] shoulder. Delight and amusement enough it was to listen to the music made by the branch, for men sore-wounded, or women in child-bed, or folk in sickness would fall asleep at the melody which was made when that branch was shaken.

[See Collection Ref. No. 56]

A bit later, Cormac encounters a shining fountain with five "melodious" streams, in tir tairngiri. This description is as follows:



...Then he sees in the garth a shining fountain, with five streams flowing out of it, and the hosts in turn drinking its water. Nine hazels of Buan grow over the well. The purple hazels drop their nuts into the fountain, and the five salmon which are in the fountain sever them and send their husks floating down the streams. Now the sound of the falling of those streams was more melodious than any music that men sing...

[See Collection Ref. No. 57]

The legendary king Bran also was lured or transported to the Otherworld dimension via mysterious music:

...One day, in the neighborhood of his stronghold, Bran went about alone, when he heard music behind him. As often as he looked back, 'twas still behind him, the music was. At last he fell asleep at the music, such was its sweetness. When he awoke from his sleep, he saw close by him a branch of silver with white blossoms...then Bran took the branch in his hand to his royal house...they saw a woman in strange raiment...

[See Collection Ref. No. 68]

It is interesting to note that in this instance, the sidhe woman comes after he has received the musical branch and heard the music. She then sings fifty quatrains to Bran and his men about the Land of Promise, to which Bran decides to go with her to explore. Music here is portrayed as being an inherent part of the Otherworld the woman sings about.

#### 11) Protective Effects:

In one noteworthy instance a worried homeowner, king Cu Roi chants a musical song over his home every night from wherever in the world he might be, illustrating the protective power of music:

...In whatever part of the world Cu Roi might be in, he sang a spell over his stronghold each night; it would then revolve as swiftly as a mill wheel turns, so that its entrance was never found after sunset...

[See Collection Ref. No. 34]

12) Blessings and gifts bestowed:

Hearing music often motivates the listener(s) to reward the musician with gifts and rewards as portrayed in this literature. Such a situation is shown in this excerpt from Accalam na Senorach ("The Colloquy of the Ancient Men"):

...Cascorach played his timpan, inspiring it with a certain fairy cadence; whence it is reported that to the marvellous magic music which he made for them, wounded men would have slept. Which done, jewels and things of price were given to the minstrel...

[See Collection Ref. No. 87]

For one other such reference, please see number 14.

13) Effects of music to prophecy a future king's realm:

From the Metrical Dindshenchas, we have several examples of an episode in which Cathair, son of Fedlimid, king of Erin from Alenn, has a dream and asks the king's druid to interpret it for him. In one of his prophetic dreams, the music heard from the crown of a tree signifies, to the king's druid, that Cathair will one day be king himself, and that he will have great eloquence in governing a multitude:

...`This is the stately music  
that was in the crown of the enduring tree--  
thy noble eloquence, lovelier thereby,  
when appeasing a multitude.'...

[See Collection Ref. No. 23]

For all of the references that address this issue, see Collection reference numbers: 21, 22, 23.

Illustratory Comparative Material:

In other cultures we also find references to the supernatural power of music and its effects upon the listener(s). From the ballads of the Scottish Highlands, similar descriptions of the effects of fairy harpers are illustrated. For example, the following excerpt from Buchan's Ballads of the North of Scotland as told by Keith Sanger and Alison Kinnaird in their informative book Tree of Strings: crann nan teud:

...Mortal men or maidens were likely to succumb to the charms of faery harp-music. The evil Knight in some versions of 'Lady Isobel and the Elf Knight' begins his seduction of the earthly princess by playing his harp to bind the rest of the household in sleep.

`He's taen a harp into his hand  
He's harped tyhem all asleep  
Except it was the King's daughter  
Who one wink couldna get.' (5)

The above Scottish example is similar to the previously cited early Irish instance of the use of Craiphtine's harp music to aid a seduction, in that case to bring the lovers Moriath and Labraid together.

The mysterious manifestation of ghostly music is also documented in cases of the Zulu shamans. When a young shaman receives his "calling" from the Otherworld, sometimes against his or her own will, the individual is often very ill for weeks, having unusual dreams and visions. The moment of initiation by the spirits of the Otherworld occurs when the individual in question "receives his song"--previously completely unknown to him. This moment of receiving his own individual song from the Otherworld is greatly celebrated by the elders and the tribe. Here, a young man

speaks of his new shamanic status:

...now there are things which I see when I lie down. When I left home I had composed three songs, without knowing whence they came; I heard the song, and then just sang it, and sang the whole of it without ever having learnt it... (6)

Such a description of a man receiving previously unknown melodies from another world is very similar to the Irish example cited earlier, where a man went up a mountain, and came back with the vision of Second Sight and his very own song. [See Collection Ref. No. 15] Similarly, Mircea Eliade in his classic work Shamanism states that many shamans often describe their initiation in terms of receiving songs in a dream state; thus, "...in the Apapocuva Guarani tribe, the prerequisite for becoming a shaman is learning magical songs, which are taught by a dead relative in dreams." (7) In such cases, the phenomenon of mysterious, unseen music--with no musician present--serves a function as part of some type of spiritual initiation from the Otherworld.

Probably one of the best known examples of the joyful effects of music in early world literature is that of Krishna, from the Puranas of the Hindu tradition. Portrayed as a flute-playing god, Krishna is seen by many women to be especially seductive and they come to the sound of his ecstatic and joyful music, as "...none is able to resist Krishna's beauty and charm. He is described as retiring to the woods, where he plays his flute on autumn nights when the moon is full. Hearing the music, the women are driven mad with passion..." (8)

Also well-known, from Homer's Odyssey, are the dangerous and

often deadly effects of the singing of the Sirens. In a passage from Book V, Lady Circe warns Odysseus what he will next encounter on his journey..."your next landfall will be upon the Sirens: and these craze the wits of every mortal who gets so far. If a man comes on them unwittingly and lend their ear to the Siren-voices, he will never again behold wife and little ones...The thrilling song of the Sirens will steal his life away, as they sit singing...amongst skeletons which flutter with the rags of skin rotting upon the bones..." (9)

B): A similar range of apparently supernatural effects of music is also found in more overtly Christian examples.

#### 1) Joyful or ecstatic effects of music in Heaven

The Christian Heaven is clearly portrayed as having very joyful effects. Often such joy borders on the ecstatic; the music of God's Heaven is often viewed as indescribable in our mortal, earthly terms. In many of these references a saint goes to Heaven in a vision, or, the Heavenly greeting of his departing soul is described in terms of the Heavenly hosts making music for it--the music of the spheres and angelic hosts. Visions of Heaven and Hell are also portrayed here.

The music references in this Collection, although often written in the same time period, in the same monasteries, and referring to the same saints, are from a tradition clearly distinct from the early Irish Apocrypha visions of Heaven and Hell, as so aptly clarified by Maire Herbert, when discussing the Apocrypha tradition: "...although visits to Heaven and Hell seem to be an

integral part of this tradition, it should not be confused with the theme, popular from the time of Plato throughout the Middle Ages, of visions of Heaven and Hell with detailed descriptions of the Otherworld. In this case, [with the Apocrypha] there are no descriptions and the 'tour' is described as part of the natural progress of every soul." (10) The examples here, then, do come with detailed descriptions of the Otherworld and often describe joyful, ecstatic effects as inherently present in it.

In one of the most famous examples from this literature of the pure joy of the plains of Paradise, this example is taken from Betha Brennain, ("The Life of St. Brendan"), in which St. Brendan and his men encounter an old hermit monk on an island Paradise:

...`Search ye, and see,' saith he, `the plains of Paradise and the delightful fields of the land, radiant, famous, lovable, profitable, lofty, noble, beautiful, delightful. A land odorous, flower-smooth, blessed. A land many-melodied, musical, shouting for joy, unmournful.'...

[See Collection Ref. No. 136]

Another example that illustrates the joyful Christian Land of the Saints, (tir na naeb), is from Fis Adamnan ("The Vision of St.

Adamnan"):...for the Saints have need of nothing but to be listening to the music to which they listen and to behold the light which they look at...and the song of the birds of the Heavenly Host makes music for them. Glorious bands of the guardian angels are continually coing obeisance and service among these assemblies in the presence of the King...They celebrate the eight canonical hours...the choral song of the Archangels coming in in harmony. The birds and the Archangels lead the song, and all the Heavenly Host, both saints and holy virgins, answer them in antiphony...there are three precious stones making soft sounds and sweet music between every two principal assemblies...

[See Collection Ref. No. 134]

Obviously, the Land of the Saints is portrayed as very musical, and with utterly joyful effects--including harmonious interactions among the angelic hosts, three precious stones, birds, and saints, all singing praises to God in an atmosphere of ecstatic joy in God's Heaven.

Perhaps one of the most unique examples of the power of joyful musical effects of Christian Heaven comes from Betha Coluimb Cille, ("The Life of St. Columcille") where the pagan king Mongan goes to see St. Columcille for consultation. At this meeting, he is told by St. Columcille to put his head under the edge of his cloak and Mongan is thus shown all the wonders of Heaven:

...And there was shown to him the kingdom of God with its glory and its happiness and its many harmonies. And he fell asleep at that music; but as Coluimb Cille thought it long that he slept, he raised his cloak from his head and thereupon Mongan awoke. And Coluimb Cille asked him what he thought of that vision that had been given him. 'I am not able to define it,' said Mongan, 'for if I had a thousand heads, and a thousand tongues in each head of them, I would not be able to tell thee the least glory in the kingdom of God'...

[See Collection Ref. No. 147]

For the references in this literature that describe the joyful effects of the music of the Christian Heaven or Paradise, please see Collection reference numbers: 76, 77, 78, 79, 82, 134, 136, 138, 139, 142, 143, 151, 154, 158, 159, 171, 172, 173.

## 2) Complete absence of any effects of music in Hell:

Hell itself is portrayed as being completely devoid of any music at all, the only sounds being the pathetic howls of the damned. Also from Fis Adamnan ("The Vision of St. Adamnan"):

...Then, the angel shows Adamnan Hell, and explains:  
 Now while the saintly companies of the Heavenly Host  
 sing joyfully and gladly the harmonious chorus of  
 the eight canonical hours, praising the Lord, the  
 souls give forth pitiful and grievous howls as they  
 are beaten without respite by throngs of demons...

[See Collection Ref. No. 134]

3) Clergy put into a trance-like sleep state by music:

In the following category, clergymen are portrayed as falling into a trance-like sleep state after listening to music--especially the powerful effects of the sidhe or fairy musicians. As cited earlier in the Performers chapter, when St. Patrick and his fellow clergy heard the beautiful fairy music of the harpist Cascorach, they all fell into a trance-like sleep state; they later awoke from it and a lively debate about such music and its effects ensued. [See Collection Ref. Nos.: 84, 85, 86] Some of the saints, while out at sea on various island journeys, are portrayed as encountering the music of the Otherworld and falling asleep to it in spite of themselves.

In the following example, from Betha Kieran ("The Life of St. Kieran"), St. Kieran of Saighir has performed the miracle of reviving eight harpers from the dead after they had been dead in a loch for a month:

...they took to them [the harpers] their harps, and in presence of the king, of Kieran, and of all the rest in general, played delicious melody: in which music was delightfulness such that a great number of the multitude fell asleep to it; and glory was given to God and to Kieran...

[See Collection Ref. No. 155]



For the references in the Collection that address the issue of the clergy falling into a trance-like sleep state after hearing music, please see Collection reference numbers: 80, 81, 84, 85, 155.

4) "Unseen" or mysterious music heard in a Christian context:

This category includes such phenomenon as mysterious music around the church at the time of the birth of a saint, or "unseen" music constantly around a young boy, later to become St. Colman. Such totally "unseen" or mysterious music is heard in these examples, yet no musician is ever seen:

...On the night, however, when Colman son of Luachain was born...That night bishop Etchen stayed in Tech Lomain, and when matins had come and the clerics rose up for it...they heard many marvellous kinds of music around the church on every side; and nothing more marvellous and more melodious had ever been heard by them before--viz., angels of Heaven making welcome to Colman son of Luachain, as on the night of the birth of Christ angels made many marvellous kinds of music around Bethlehem on every side...

[See Collection Ref. No. 138]

Also, regarding the young St. Colman:

...the boy was brought up piously and humbly; and wherever he used to be they would hear psalms and choral song, and the sound of a bell at every canonical hour, and the singing of mass every Sunday, so that people would come to ask, 'what was the assembly that came here last night?'...

[See Collection Ref. No. 139]

This category of unseen, mysterious music also includes those situations where a saint's special bell--almost always portrayed as having a personal, supernatural relationship to the Saint himself--suddenly "sounds" of its own accord. The following example illustrates this phenomenon, and that of the mysterious "Keepers of

St. Patrick" that are still alive, but hidden, from "The Tripartite Life of St. Patrick":

...Then Patrick went till he was biding at Achad Fobair, and there he celebrated Easter. There are, moreover, keepers belonging to Patrick's household alive in Ireland still. There is a man from him in Cruachan Aigle--they hear the voice of his bell, and he is not found...

[See Collection Ref. No. 167]

For the examples from the Collection that describe such incidents of unseen or mysterious music in a Christian context, with no musician present, please see Collection Reference numbers: 138, 139, 148, 164, 167, 168.

5) Effects of Saint's music with beneficial, protective effects:

This category includes those references that pertain to a particular saint using his bell to aid or bless others, or, in some circumstances, God himself "sends" a bell from Heaven to assist the clergy in some manner, or to "ring" when the proper location for a monastery is found. The following example, from Betha Colmain ("The Life of St. Colman"), illustrates the beneficial effects of the sweet-sounding bell of St. Colman, called the Finnfaidech:

...and he [the priest] had no bell with him to sound the summons for hearing his Mass, so that then the Finnfaidech (sweet-sounding bell) of Colman mac Luachan was sent down to him from Heaven, and the mark of its rim is still there in the stone. So the bell was struck by them...

[See Collection Ref. No. 141]

For the other references that describe the beneficial effects of a saint's bell, please see Collection reference numbers: 140, 141, 148, 152, 156, 167, 168, 169.

Also in this category of music having a beneficial or protective effect is that of a Saint's musical chanting. Often, when blessing someone or something, a saint will be described in this literature as chanting the psalms or hymns of God, with a resulting beneficial effect. From Betha Coluimb Cille ("The Life of St. Columcille") we see this phenomenon illustrated when St. Columcille saved a beloved grove of trees by reciting a protective holy humn:

...So great was the fire and the flame that it almost burned a grove of trees that was in the place, and Coluimb Cille made this hymn to protect the grove: ...and this hymn is said against every fire and every thunder from that to this, and whosoever recites it on lying down and rising, it will protect any nine he wishes from fire and lightning...

[See Collection Ref. No. 146]

For other such examples where a saint chants a hymn or psalm to protect someone or something from danger, please see Collection reference numbers: 157, 166.

#### 6) Healing or therapeutic effects of music:

The music of Heaven is often "sent" to a saint here on earth during especially difficult times in their missionary work--often through the birds of Heaven or the saint's bell, as discussed earlier. In the following example, from the Metrical Dindshenchas, the location of the "White Lake of Carra" was named after St. Patrick received beautiful white birds from God, during a time of great duress:

...God sent to comfort him at that season,  
a flock of birds, angelic, purely bright,  
over the clear loch unremittingly, they  
sang a chorus, a gentle proclamation...

[See Collection Ref. No. 19]

For one other such reference from the Collection that describes the healing or therapeutic effects of music, see number 137.

7) Effects of Saint's music with destructive, cursing effects:

Sometimes the power of a saint's bell and its music was to be greatly feared--as sometimes it was used against pagan kings or as an exorcism measure, as portrayed in this literature. In many instances it is used in a deliberately destructive manner by a saint to punish those who would not convert to Christianity, as the following example from Betha Fechin Fabair, ("The Life of St. Fechin of Fore") illustrates:

...Of a time when Fechin was learning with Presbyter Naithi in Achad Conairi, he is set one day to keep the meadow lest it should be stript bare by strangers' cattle. Thereafter the king's horses and herds are put into it in spite of Fechin. Fechin cursed them, and struck his bell at them, so that they found death therewith. When the king heard that, he comes before Fechin, and flung himself on his knees, and sought forgiveness of his sins. Fechin gives him absolution, and brought his horses and herds back to life; and God's name and Fechin's were magnified by that miracle...

[See Collection Ref. No. 153]

For other such examples of the destructive or cursing effects of a saint's bell, see Collection reference numbers: 135, 149, 150, 153, 165.

Saints are also sometimes portrayed in this literature as chanting "maledictive" psalms and hymns "at" someone or something, as a curse--often to drive out demons, as an exorcism measure, or, "against" someone who refuses to convert to Christianity or help the Christian community. Such "curses" by a saint may seem

remarkably similar to the cursing "satires" by the fili, as noted by Tomas O'Cathasaigh: "To call one of them a curse and the other a satire is a matter of nomenclature only; we tend to use curse for the malediction of a saint, and satire for that of a fili...the extent of the overlap between the two categories remains to be determined." (11) Regarding such musical maledictions, however, both have the same destructive effects through the chanting.

From "The Tripartite Life of Patrick", the following example shows St. Patrick, like Moses, on a retreat of prayer on top of a mountain for forty days and forty nights. He encounters demonic black birds, sings maledictive psalms and flings his bell at them, and God later sends lovely, musical white birds:

...Now at the end of those forty days and forty nights the mountain was filled with black birds, so that he knew not Heaven nor earth. He sang maledictive psalms at them. They left him not because of this. Then his anger grew against them. He strikes his bell at them, so that the men of Ireland heard its voice, and he flung it at them, so that its gap broke out of it, and that bell is 'Brigit's Gapling'...No demon came to the land of Erin after that till the end of seven years and seven months and seven days and seven nights. Then the angel went to console Patrick, and...brought white birds around the Cruachan, and they used to sing sweet melodies for him...

[See Collection Ref. No. 165]

The date of "The Tripartite Life of St. Patrick" has been a matter of scholarly debate, with Dr. Kenneth Jackson concluding that it does have much material that is quite old, and states that he believes that "there is a very large tenth century element, in some cases earlier..." (12) For other references that address this issue of a saint chanting musical maledictive psalms or singing hymns "against" someone or something, please see Collection

reference numbers: 146, 150, 151.

8) Music used to "summon" saints

Similar to the earlier examples in an overtly primal context of music used to summon people, we have a Christian example where music--in this case, the music of the bell of St. Patrick--is used to summon individuals to a holy site. From Betha Coluimb Cille ("The Life of St. Columcille"), St. Columcille explains to fellow cleric Baithin about how St. Patrick will come for the men and women of Ireland on the Day of Doom:

... 'Tell me now,' said Baithin, 'how shall it fare with Patrick in the Day of Doom for sake of the men of Erin?' 'I will tell a portion of it,' said Columcille, 'as far as God shall permit me. Patrick will come to Cluain mac Nois to meet the men of Erin. Then he will cause a bell to be rung in Cruachan Aigle, to wit, the Bernan of Patrick which he himself formerly broke upon the demons banishing them from the Cruach. And the men and women of Erin shall come at the voice of that bell...

[See Collection Ref. No. 148]

This "summoning" category also includes those instances where a given saint is transported to an Otherworldly dimension--here, the Christian Heaven. In the following example, St. Fursa is transported to Heaven, and hears the musical chanting of angels:

...when he had built the church we have mentioned, a serious illness attacked him therein from one Saturday to another, as the Book of his own Life relates; and from evening to cockcrow he was taken out of his body, and he heard the chanting of angels of Heaven, and he beheld them before him. And this is what they were chanting: 'Ibunt sancti de uirtute in uirtutem' [Psalm 83:8] i.e., 'the saints shall advance from virtue to virtue.' And this [is] also what they were chanting: 'Videbitur Deus deorum in Sion.' [Psalm 83:8] i.e., 'the God of gods will be seen on Mount Zion'...

[See Collection Ref. No. 154]

On occasion, God sends Otherworldly messengers from the Christian Heaven, down to earth, to visit a saint or chosen individual. In the following example, a student harper wishes to play for St. Brendan, but he resists, as he claims the best music he has ever heard came in the form of a shining bird, St. Michael in disguise, sent to him from God to sing for him:

...I saw a shining bird at the window, and it sat on the altar. I was unable to look at it because of the rays which surrounded it, like those of the sun...  
 'who are you?' said Brennain. 'The angel Michael,' it said, 'come to speak with you.' 'I give thanks to God for speaking with you, said Brennain, 'and why have you come?' 'To bless you and to make music for you for your Lord,' said the bird...[says St. Brennain to the student harper:]...`After that music, no music of the world seems any sweeter to me...

[See Collection Ref. No. 137]

Upon death, a saint's holy spirit is "summoned" to Heaven, often accompanied by the beautiful music of choirs of angels. From the Amra of Columcille, a late 11th c. manuscript, we have a description of the departing soul being summoned to the Christian Heaven:

...He has reached plains where it is a custom that melodies are not born. In which non-birth of melodies is the custom, but they are always in it...  
 He went with music to Heaven-land after his cross. It is how he went to the land of Heaven after his suffering here, with the music of the family of Heaven and of earth: or, in the chief-choir of the angels of Heaven...

[See Collection Ref. Nos. 142-3]

#### Illustratory Comparative Material:

Perhaps one of the most famous examples of the effects of music from the Judeo-Christian tradition of that of David's playing

the harp for king Saul. From I Samuel 16:14, the servants of king Saul are quite worried about his condition of great depression, due to an evil spirit, and recommend music to him as a beneficial remedy:

...`look for a skilled harpist; when the evil spirit from God comes over you, he will play and it will do you good.' Saul said to his attendants: `Find me, please, a man who plays well, and bring him to me.' ...David went to Saul and entered his service...And whenever the spirit from God came over Saul, David would take a harp and play; Saul would then be soothed; it would do him good, and the evil spirit would leave him...

Ethnomusicologist Gilbert Rouget interprets the above episode as David's harp and its music serving the function of reconciling Saul with God. He does not accept the theory that its effect is merely therapeutic or healing, as the text does specifically mention the influence of an "evil spirit", and Saul was apparently obsessed with this aspect of his problem. However, he does not feel that the theory that the music served the function of a mere exorcism is correct either--mainly because the ultimate effect of David's soothing music on Saul was that Saul was reconciled with the good spirit of Yahweh; thus: "... By playing his lyre David reestablishes God's presence, which means that he restores in Saul, in an attenuated form, the state of inspired prophet that he had momentarily lost. Granted, this is a rather complicated interpretation, but it does have the advantage of taking into account all the textual data. It also remains within the general system of relations between music and prophetic inspiration among the Hebrews..." (13) Perhaps, then, the main reason why Saul was so



concerned--and depressed--was that he felt he had "lost" the prophetic inspiration of Yahweh and wanted to regain it through the effects of music?

From the New Testament, we have in Revelation John's vision of Heaven and the singing angels in it. Their ecstatic, joyful hymns to God, along with the consistent chanting of the four living creatures, exemplify the songs of the Heavenly Host and the joyful effects on John, the listener/visitor:

...In my vision, I heard the sound of an immense number of angels gathered around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; there were ten thousand times ten thousand of them and thousands upon thousands, loudly chanting...[Rev. 5:11]...  
[later in text:]...And I saw in Heaven another sign, great and wonderful: seven angels...all had harps from God, and they were singing the hymn of Moses, the servant of God, and the hymn of the Lamb... [Rev. 15:3]...

## II) MORE MUNDANE EFFECTS OF MUSIC IN EVERYDAY LIFE

### A). 1) Effects of Music in Warfare

Music is often portrayed as being present on the battlefield, usually described as the "music" of the swords. For example, from Catha Maige Tuired I ("The First Battle of Moytura") we have the following:

...As soon as the Dagda heard the music of the swords in the battle-stress, he hastened to the place of conflict with deliberate bounds, like the rush of a great waterfall...

[See Collection Ref. No. 2]

The "music" of the sword of famed warrior Conall is portrayed in the following instance from Cath Ruis na Rig for Boinn ("The Battle of Ross Na Rig on the Boyne"):

...It is then that Conall drew the sharp long sword out of its sheath of war, and played the music of his sword on the armies. The ring of Conall's sword was heard throughout the battalions on both sides, at that moment of time. However, as soon as they heard the music of Conall's sword, their hearts quaked... [later in text]: Conall came along the armies and played the music of his sword on them, till ten hundred armed men fell by him.

[See Collection Ref. No. 32]

For other examples that describe the effects of music in and around the scene of a battle, see reference numbers: 2, 3, 32, 43, 64, 131.

2) Joyful effects of music in everyday life:

From Esnada Tige Buchet, the clearly joyful effects of the music at a nobleman's celebration are described:

...The song of Buchet's house to the companies: his laughing cry to the companies: 'Welcome to you!'. ...The song of the fifty warriors with their purple garments...to make music...the song of the fifty maidens...their song delighting the host. The song of the fifty harps afterwards till morning, soothing the host with music. Hence is the name 'The Songs of Buchet's House.'...

[See Collection Ref. No. 59]

3) Music as being beneficial for a king's realm:

The effects of music are often portrayed as being largely good for a king and the success of his reign. From the Metrical Dindshenchas, the poem entitled "Taltiu" describes the music of Taltiu, a goddess in early Ireland and also relates to the annual Fair of Taltiu and its music:

...White-sided Taltiu uttered in her land a true prophecy, that so long as every prince should accept her, Erin should not be without perfect song...

[See Collection Ref. No. 30]

Likewise, in the following example, St. Patrick is told by Caeilte, a legendary very old survivor of the Fianna:

...Three sorts of music, and O music of three kinds,  
that comely kings enjoyed! Music of harps, melody  
of timpani, [and the] humming of Trogan's son  
Fer-tuinne...

[See Collection Ref. No. 96]

One other example from a 9th-c. poem comments on the early Irish kingship site of the Hill of Alenn, and music in everyday life there:

...The music of its bent hard anvils, the sound of its  
songs from the tongues of poets, the fire of its men  
at the great contest, the beauty of its women at  
the high assembly...

...Its lovely melodies at every hour, its wineship on the  
blue wave, its shower of silver of great brilliance,  
its gold neckbands from the lands of Gaul...

[See Collection Ref. No. 131]

#### 4) Music and its disturbing or jarring effects:

Some of the musicians present at the fairs are portrayed as being quite common, and the effects of their music as loud and disturbing. For example, consider the effects of the bawdy musicians at the annual Fair of Carmun:

...Pipes, fiddles, gleemen,  
bones-players and bag-pipers,  
a crowd hideous, noisy, profane,  
shriekers and shouters...

[See Collection Ref. No. 12]

#### 5) Pleasant or calming effects of music in everyday life:

From the same Fair of Carmun, other musicians present are portrayed in much better terms--as the fair's "great privileges":

...These are the Fair's great privileges:  
trumpets, fiddles, hollow-throated horns,  
pipers, timpanists unwearied,  
poets and meek musicians...

[See Collection Ref. No. 13]

Apparently, the effects of such mild-mannered "meek musicians" are seen as clearly preferable to the loud, obnoxious type of musician portrayed earlier. Here the musicians are greatly appreciated in everyday life as an integral part of the fair.

#### 6) Poetry and the effects of the music of nature:

Great appreciation of the effects of the "music" of the natural elements often plays a key role in the poetry of the early Irish period. While much of this poetry is portrayed in an overtly Christian context, not all of it is, as exemplified by the following ninth-century poem entitled "May Day"--and attributed to hero Finn mac Cumail of the Fianna:

...Woodland music plays; melody provides perfect peace;  
dust is blown from dwelling-place, and haze from lake  
full of water...

...Swallows dart aloft; vigour of music surrounds the hill  
soft rich fruit flourishes...

...the hardy cuckoo sings; the trout leaps; strong is the  
swift warrior's...

[See Collection Ref. No. 123]

This description is similar in tone and feeling to the following reference from Echtra Airt meic Cuind ("The Adventures of Art son of Conn"), which also describes the effects of the "music" of the natural elements in everyday life:

...As for the maiden, she found a coracle which had no need  
of rowing, but leaving it to the harmony of the wind  
over sea she came to Ben Edair meic Etgaith...

[See Collection Ref. No. 53]

For other poetry references that use a primal context and mention the appreciation of the effects of music in everyday life, please see Collection reference numbers: 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 121, 122, 123, 126, 129, 131, 132.

B) A similar range of effects of music at a more mundane level is found in overtly Christian contexts.

The major category here is that of the descriptions by the Christian hermit monks of their great appreciation of the effects of the "music" of the natural elements in and around them in their everyday monastic lives.

1) Joyful effects of music in hermit's everyday life:

The great joy of the "music" of the natural elements is portrayed by the hermits as being a celebration of God's wonderful world in everyday life. They often show a great appreciation for the creatures of the wild and of the birds, seeing them as God's little musicians. Such prayerful gratitude is seen in the following example, from a ninth-century hermit poem entitled "The Scribe in the Woods":

...A hedge of trees overlooks me; a blackbird's  
lay sings to me (an announcement which I shall  
not conceal); above my lined book the birds'  
chanting sings to me.

A clear-voiced cuckoo sings to me (goodly utterance)  
in a grey cloak from bush fortresses. The Lord  
is indeed good to me: well do I write beneath a  
forest of woodland.

[See Collection Ref. No. 104]

For other overtly Christian hermit references that show such great joy and appreciation of the effects of music in their

everyday environment, please see Collection reference numbers: 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108. [NOTE: For those references from the poem entitled "The Cry of the Garb" that are often attributed to both St. Moling and Suibne Geilt, and that mention the effects of music in everyday life, please see Collection references: 111, 112, 113, 114.

For those references from the poem entitled "Suibne In the Woods", where wandering "madman poet" Suibne, due to the curse of St. Ronan, often comments on his appreciation of the musical effects of the natural elements in his environment in exile, please see reference numbers: 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, as there is much scholarly debate about age and authorship of the Suibne Geilt material.

2) Melancholy effects of an absence of music in winter:

One reference clearly shows a hermit monk's distress at the complete lack of any music at all in the bitter cold of winter. From the Old Irish tenth-century poem entitled "Uath Beinne Etair", we have the following commentary on the dreary silence of winter:

...The fishes of Innis Fail are a-roaming,  
There is no marge nor well of waves,  
In the lands there is no land,  
Not a bell is heard, no crane talks...

[See Collection Ref. No. 127]

3) Peaceful, calming effects of music in hermit's everyday life:

The generally calming and/or peaceful effects of the music of the natural elements is described here in the poem "Summer Has Gone":

...The cuckoo sings sweet music  
and there is smooth soft sleep...

[See Collection Ref. No. 124]

4) Music causes a trance-like sleep state in hermit:

For an example where the spokesman of the poem "The Cry of the Garb"--(attributed to both St. Mo Ling and/or Suibne Geilt)--falls asleep to the melodies of the birds:

...Musical birds of the shore, music-sweet their  
constant cryings! Lonely longing has seized me  
to hear their chanting as they sing the hours...

...I sleep to those melodies on mountain tops and  
tree tops; the tunes which I hear are music to  
my soul...

[See Collection Ref. No. 112]

For two other Christian hermit poetry references that mention falling asleep to the effects of music in their everyday life, see Collection reference numbers: 111 and 124.

5) Far-reaching effects of Saint's singing:

One example of the unusually far-reaching effects of St. Columcille's singing of the psalms, as part of everyday Christian monastic life, comes from Betha Coluimb Cille ("The Life of St. Columcille") in which the young boy Columcille is described:

...And so diligent was the memorizing and so loud the  
voice that a convent of nuns who were a mile and a  
half away from him heard the sound of his voice; for  
it was usual to hear him so far, as the poet said:  
'The sound of his voice, Columb Cille's, much its  
melody beyond every choir, for twelve hundred paces,  
mighty the courses, was the distance it was audible...

[See Collection Ref. No. 145]

6) Music as very inspirational in everyday Christian life: a boy hears singing of clerics, then decides to become a monk:

The young boy St. Mochuda, when asked by the king why he had been gone so long and worried everyone, had the following to say:

...Mochuda replied, `Sir, this is why I have stayed away--through attraction of the holy chant of the bishop and clergy; I have never heard anything so beautiful as this; the clerics sang as they went along the whole way before me; they sang until they arrived at their house, and thenceforth they sang till they went to sleep. The bishop however remained by himself far into the night praying by himself when the others had retired. And I wish, O king, that I might learn their psalms and ritual...

[See Collection Ref. No. 161]

CONCLUSION:

We have now seen the two major categories and the examples from the Collection of the effects of music in each category. As previously stated, one may notice similar types of effects--joy, melancholy, a trance-like sleep states, etc.--in each of the categories. However, in the analysis of the material in these two categories re: the effects of music, one cannot help but conclude the following: the more extreme or dramatic a given effect is portrayed in this literature, the more likely it is to also be portrayed in a supernatural context. It seems as though the degree of supernatural influence tends to determine the degree of how dramatic the effect is on the listener. This seems to apply for both the overtly primal and the overtly Christian contexts.

For example, consider the effect of joy, happiness, or ecstasy on the listener, as a result of hearing music. In the examples from



everyday life, whether in an overtly Christian context or not, such an effect is described as "delighting" the hosts at a celebration [Ref. No. 59], a "lovely moment" [Ref. No. 99], as "no mournful music" [Ref. No. 101], a "pleasant sound" [Ref. No. 105], or, for further instance, as "lively the tune" [Ref. No. 107], etc.

However, when this same effect--here, joy or ecstasy--is found in a supernatural context, be it overtly Christian or not--this same effect is generally portrayed in a far more dramatic manner. For example, such supernatural joy of the genntraigi ("laughter-strain") is described in the primal contexts as "...forcing them all into a cachination such as their very lungs became visible..." [Ref. No. 54]; or, as causing thirty of king Ailill's men to "die" of rapture [Ref. No. 45]--clearly situations that are rare in everyday human experience. From the supernatural Christian examples we also find rather dramatic descriptions of the music of Heaven, in which not only all of the saints, Archangels and birds of Heaven sing in harmony with the Heavenly Hosts, but, also "three precious stones making soft sounds and sweet music"...[Ref. No. 134]; or, where all of the birds of Heaven sing and beat their wings in harmony, chanting to the glory of God--again, situations that are not possible in everyday experience. As portrayed in this literature, it appears that "something" has intervened--i.e., a divine or supernatural influence of some type--to "cause" such unusual dramatic effects. Also, one must consider that while Heaven and the primal Otherworld are almost always described as having sweet, joyful effects of the music, Hell and the season of

winter, are shown to have a complete absence of any music at all.

Regarding the effect discussed earlier of the trance-like sleep state--as portrayed in everyday contexts, overtly primal or Christian, such a sleep state is described in more ordinary terms, i.e.: "...musical birds...I sleep to those melodies on mountain tops..." [Ref. No. 112] or "I hear melodious music in the [river] Garb" [Ref. No. 111] and "...the cuckoo sings...there is smooth, soft sleep..." [Ref. No. 124] The listener in such examples tends to reflect an overall feeling of being relaxed or calmed by the music, and then falling to sleep to it.

However, when this same effect, that of a trance-like sleep state, is portrayed in the supernatural contexts, we often have a situation where the listener(s) falls asleep for days, or an extended period of time, or where those in great pain would quickly fall asleep to the music--again, "unusual" situations as defined by the conditions of normal everyday reality. For example...after hearing the "music...she lay asleep for three days, no one daring to move her..." [Ref. No. 51] (The fact that "no one dared to move her" seems indicative that they perhaps felt there was something "sacred" or "special" about such a trance-like sleep state after hearing music.) Also, consider this description of the music of Fer fi, an elfin harper: "...though saws were being plied where there were women in sharpest pains of childbirth, and brave men that were wounded early in the day, nevertheless would such people sleep to the fitful melody..." [Ref. No. 89] In the normal experience of reality, such people in great pain might be calmed by the music, but would certainly very rarely, if ever, quickly fall

asleep to it. Also, consider the following: the "...musical choir lulled them to sleep...thus they were in the same condition, till the third day..." [Ref. No. 109]; when the clergy heard the music, they fell "....sleep till the end of three days and three nights. Thereafter they awake..." [Ref. No.80] While not all of the supernatural examples are quite so extreme, many often speak of the music as being so beautiful that "many" would sleep to it, etc.--one distinctly gets the impression that the early Irish are trying to clearly distinguish the effects of this supernatural type of music from the ordinary music of everyday life by dramatizing them.

Chanting in everyday monastic life is often portrayed in fairly usual terms, i.e., "...the clerics sang as they went the whole way before me; they sang until they arrived at their house..." [Ref. No. 161]. When chanting is described as part of God's Heaven, however, a supernatural dimension, it takes on more unusual characteristics: "...the birds and the Archangels lead the song, and all the Heavenly Host, both saints and holy virgins, answer them in antiphony..." [Ref. No. 134]. Also when a given saint (or poet, if portrayed in an overtly primal context) deliberately chants for certain specific effects of good or ill, such healing and cursing qualities seem to indicate some kind of "intervention" from another dimension into everyday life in order to create such an effect, as a direct result of the chanting of the musical psalms/chants.

Melancholy or sad effects are noted in all of the categories, as are calming, pleasant or peaceful effects. The "three strains"

occur only in primal context examples. Joyful effects are consistently portrayed across the board, and the trance-like sleep state is portrayed in some manner in all of the categories. However, in these cases, as mentioned earlier, it is largely a matter of the "degree" of influence of the supernatural that determines how dramatic or extreme the effect will be. So that, as well as the effort to make distinctions, impressions of continuity, of a difficulty in drawing very clear lines of demarcation emerges.

So those effects of music which are not so dramatic indicate more mundane status; those which are dramatic, even destructive, often indicate more supernatural status. For example, a fairy maiden, on the river Boyne, falls overboard her boat and drowns, due to the "doleful music" of the fairy mounds [Ref. No. 18]; Aillen mac Midhna's notorious annual destructions of Tara each Samhain [Ref. No. 91]; the nine deadly pipers of Sid Breg "who will slay, but they cannot be slain" [Ref. No. 48]; and fairy harpist Cliach was killed by a dragon, attracted to him by his sweet music [Ref. No. 16]. The Christian supernatural contexts, too, show music as having a deadly potential: re: the curse of Columcille to anyone who would disturb a bell sanctuary ... "for a sign of malediction upon him, and that he would not complete his year. And that has been often proved..." [Ref. No. 150]; St. Columcille cursed a man who would not give him an island for his ministry [Ref. No. 151]; and St. Patrick is portrayed as singing "maledictive psalms" at black birds upon a mountain [Ref. No. 165.]

Music is shown to have a beneficial effect in the overtly

primal everyday examples, i.e., as a positive effect in a king's realm, part of the "perfect song" of a fair [Ref. No. 30], and as having a prosperous effect in the community ... "each cow and each animal that heard it, two thirds surplus milk always was milked from them." [Ref. No. 35] In everyday Christian monastic life, music is also portrayed as having a largely positive effect, as soothing and calming for the hermit monks, or as inspiring a young boy to become a monk--and, later a famous saint. [Ref. No. 161] When portrayed in supernatural contexts, music is also seen as having positive effects; hence, St. Patrick's famous bell, the Bernan of Patrick, is described in this literature as banishing away demons [Ref. No. 148]; St. Columcille's protective musical chants save a grove of trees from fire [Ref. No. 146] and the protective hymn given to St. Patrick by an angel [Ref. No. 166].

Music is shown to have a direct healing effect in the supernatural contexts. For example, God sends angelic white birds to make music for St. Patrick during a time of duress [Ref. No. 19]; the leech-doctors of the Tuatha de Danann sing spells around the well of Slane, rejuvenating the wounded and dead [Ref. No. 6]; and emotional healing from depression and low morale by Teigue and his men on their journey out at sea by the singing of the birds of tir tairngiri ("The Land of Promise"); and, the effects of music are described as keeping men from murdering each other as "no one slew the other"--clearly a beneficial and healing effect. [Ref. No. 50]

It appears such beneficial effects have been known for centuries. The temple priests and physicians of Rome "used music

therapy up until the point when the empire was completely Christianized. The Arabs of the thirteenth century had music rooms in their hospitals. Paracelsus practiced what he called a 'musical medicine'. [14]

Even down into our modern day, the healing effects of music are observed by music therapists. The monastery of Cluny was founded in 909 A.D., devoted to a mission of compassion and peace leading directly to the Pax Dei. The Cluny monastery developed a series of infirmary practices concerning the care of the dying based on the Gregorian chants.

The founder of the Chalice of Repose Project in the USA, which uses music to aid the terminally ill and dying in the present day, has based this successful medical effort on the Cluny approach and has called its pioneering work "music thanatology". Here, "specific music is played for conscious patients, other music for those who are comatose, those in physical pain, mental agony, etc." [15] She further states that the hospital where the project is based "is the only hospital in the world with twenty-seven harps and resident singing-harpists in training." [16] The project and its aims are remarkably similar to that described in the literature of early Ireland--using harp music and singing to assist those in extreme pain or near death.

Also prevalent in this literature is the concept of the music of the spheres, especially in relation to that of the Christian Heaven or Paradise. For a sterling example of this, please see Ref. No. 134, where the "Land of the Saints" and its music is described.

Integral to this concept is the idea of constant, ever-present music in God's Heaven. Consider, for example, re: the departing soul of St. Columcille: "...he has reached plains where it is a custom that melodies are not born. In which non-birth of melodies is the custom, but they are always in it." [Ref. No. 142] This is similar to Dante's description of the last two Heavens in his cosmology, where "in these last heavens light and music are everywhere...he stands numb before the singing of those that continuously sing the music of the eternal spheres". [17]

Cyril Scott, in commenting on the effects of music upon the listener, states that "...music operates on the mind and emotions of man through the medium of suggestion. To paraphrase Aristotle's statement, if we repeatedly hear melancholy music, we tend to become melancholy; if we hear gay music, we tend to become gay, and so forth. Thus the particular emotion which a given piece of music depicts is reproduced in ourselves...we may with justification formulate the following axiom,--as in music, so in life..." [18] He goes on to point out how history has shown--especially with that of ancient Greece or Egypt--that when a particular culture changes its music to a more negative form, society begins to debase itself accordingly, the music thus having a powerful effect on society.

In this literature we can see a similar belief in the power of music and its effects in everyday life. As described in this literature, when a listener hears melancholy music, he is portrayed as becoming more melancholy himself. Upon hearing joyful music, especially that of an Otherworld dimension, he, too, becomes more joyful. It is as to exactly how joyful that is of interest--it

seems it is largely a matter of the degree of portrayed supernatural influence that determines how joyful the effect will be. In those references in which the music is portrayed as part of the Christian Heaven or a primal Otherworld dimension, the effects are often portrayed as rather extreme as compared to everyday, mundane life.

Thus, the joy of music and its effects in the everyday monastic life of a Christian hermit is portrayed as much less dramatic than the music of God's Heaven, perhaps agreeing with Cyril Scott's famous phrase, "Whereas Melody is the cry of Man to God, Harmony is the answer of God to Man". [19]



N O T E S: Chapter Four/Effects

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PLACES WHERE MUSIC IS HEARD IN EARLY MEDIEVAL IRISH LITERATUREI. Introduction

The places where music is heard in the literature of early medieval Ireland are varied, ranging from purely supernatural music heard in an Otherworldly dimension, on down to the everyday, mundane music heard in the courts of noblemen or kings, the homes of families, and at the fairs of the people.

In the analysis of the material which follows, we will look in turn at the places where music is heard in the literature of early medieval Ireland. Such locations tend to fall into three primary categories: 1) places where music is described as being heard in a purely supernatural Otherworld dimension or realm; 2) places which are liminal--i.e., those certain everyday places which, because of their inherent 'limit' or 'boundary' nature, are natural symbols of transcendence; and 3) those everyday places where music is heard in the normal, everyday affairs of the population.

Further, these categories we shall see placed side by side, and one may notice a certain parallelism and similarity in imagery and description from the purely supernatural Otherworld locations to those places described as pertaining to this world of everyday, mundane, earthly life.

Finally, the material in the overtly Christian contexts parallels that of those in the overtly primal contexts, creating an overall impression of a continuity in the descriptions of places where music is heard. In the purely supernatural and the liminal

places, be they in Christian or primal contexts, one can see the early Irish felt there was a continuous connecting to a divine source through music--particularly at certain special locations or places. Even in everyday life, if one was fortunate and the circumstances were right, unusual experiences regarding music are sometimes described as occurring in this literature.

Although we have CD's and cassette tapes in our cars, for example, in our modern world music performance tends to be designated to special times and places--i.e., one purchases a ticket to attend a concert at a particular place and time, to hear music performed by often specially trained professionals. Unlike the world of the ancient Irish, in our modern world a sense of more compartmentalization tends to predominate, where we often listen to music at specific times and places, thus making a distinction between professional and ordinary practitioners of music. In early Ireland, such was not the case, as music was much more integrated into everyday life; i.e., one would likely sing songs while working in the fields or washing the clothes, then sing or play instruments with others at home around the fire, or hear keening at a funeral.

Dr. Breandan O'Madagain points out that even up to the nineteenth century in Ireland, the whistle in everyday life was used to play to the horses while ploughing, to soothe them and cheer them while at work. There were weaving songs, milking songs, lullabies, rowing songs, songs while "pulling the quern" to grind the barley, religious songs, and so on. Although we do not know as many details of the daily life of the very early Irish medieval

period, it is possible to surmise that they, too, incorporated music into their everyday lives at least as often, and perhaps even more so. O'Madagain states that even for nineteenth century Ireland, "...Song was an integral part of a whole culture which embraced the life of the community in all its facets, giving it an artistic dimension so that 'art was a part of life, not separated from it.' It has been said that everywhere 'music transforms experience': for the Irish folk mind in the nineteenth century song had esoteric powers of transforming any situation..." (1)

Thus, with the material that follows regarding the places where music is described as being heard, it is not always clear whether the given place affects the status or quality of the music, or vice versa. Even so, we will analyse the relationship and may find influence(s) in either direction.

#### A. SUPERNATURAL PLACES

The places that are described in this literature as purely supernatural dimensions--i.e., some type of an Otherworld--occur in the Collection music references in both overtly Christian and primal contexts, as far as we can distinguish them.

From Betha Brennain, "The Life of St. Brendan", we have an example of the genre of the immrama, or vision/voyage literature. This literary genre developed out of the religious ideal and practice of pilgrimage overseas, the necessity of leaving family, friends and country for the love of God. This type of pilgrimage,

the peregrinatio, is bound up with the ascetic tradition and practice of seeking out deserted places in order to lead a solitary life of prayer and contemplation dedicated to God. In many such voyage tales, saints encounter many different countries, islands, and adventures in search of the perfect Christian life, and often choose to return home again. These vision/voyage accounts often portrayed how one could search all over the world, in many types of glamorous places in search of the perfect Christian life, and end up preferring to return home, realizing that the ideal Christian life can indeed be lived at or near one's own monastic community. Many of the Irish saints made such "voyages" around the Continent and Britain, for which they became widely known as good teachers and examples of the ideal Christian life. Seamus MacMathuna, in his work entitled "Contributions to a study of the voyages of St. Brendan and St. Malo", says:

The missionary aspect of peregrinatio plays little or no part in the immrama, other than in some instances to bring the hero back home. Such is the case, for example, in the second voyage of the Viti Brendani: when the voyagers eventually reach the secluded island which has been promised to Brendan, the latter wishes to remain there, but the old hermit on the island tells him to return home and preach to the Irish people. For the unknown hermit on the island, however, it is his place of resurrection...(2)

The places portrayed in this voyage/vision literature may not be meant as portrayals of Heaven, the Otherworld (or Hell) as in some other purely visionary literature; but they do represent some form of supernatural ideal, and as such, for purposes of 'placing' music, we may include them in the 'supernatural' section.

In many of the medieval Irish immrama, saints encounter various islands on their often perilous journeys out at sea, which often have music or musicians present in some manner. In one such instance, from Betha Brennain, ("The Life of St. Brendan"), St. Brendan and his fellow clergymen are portrayed as being told directly by a "certain old man" on an island of the power of music of the plains of Paradise--clearly an Otherworld dimension. This aged old man is shown in the literature as very wise, and is most likely a portrayal of a hermit monk. He explains to St. Brendan:

'Search ye, and see,' saith he, 'the plains of Paradise and the delightful field of the land, radiant, famous, lovable, profitable, lofty, noble, beautiful, delightful. A land odorous, flower-smooth, blessed. A land many-melodied, musical, shouting for joy, unmournful.'

[See Collection, Ref. No. 136]

Similarly, from Imram Snedgusa 7 Maic Riaqla, "The Voyage of Snedgus", Snedgus and his men also encounter such an island paradise on their journey out at sea. Here, Heaven itself is described as having a musical aspect, and with birds singing praises to God. It is thus described:

Melodious was the music of those birds a-singing psalms and canticles, praising the Lord. For they were the birds of the Plain of Heaven...

[See Collection, Ref. No. 82]

For other references which refer to music heard at a Christian island Paradise in voyage/vision literature, please see Collection references: 76, 79.

The soul's journey to Heaven is often described in the early Irish literature, and this is clearly portrayed of course as an

Otherworld dimension. Dr. John Carey, while analyzing the Otherworld concept of Heaven in early Irish literature, points out that the use of Jerusalem as an image for Heaven is commonplace in the more overtly Christian examples. The heavenly city of Revelation 21:10-27, itself based on Ezekiel, is 'the New Jerusalem', and Paul describes 'the city of the living God' as a 'heavenly Jerusalem' (Hebrews 12:22)...and in Amra Colum Cille the name Sion seems to be used for Heaven", again taking a cue from the "Zion" of the Old Testament. (3) In this twelfth century work, the Amra Colum Cille, Heaven itself as an Otherworldly location is described as the dwelling place of the soul of St. Columcille, and as having musical qualities:

He has reached plains where it is a custom  
that melodies are not born. In which non-birth  
of melodies is the custom, but they are always  
in it.

[See Collection, Ref. No. 142]

In the following famous passage from the "Tripartite Life of Patrick", the Otherworld place of Heaven is described as being filled with the music of angels:

...So after founding churches, after consecrating monasteries, after baptising human beings, after preaching the faith throughout the whole country, after so much patience and labour, after bestowing the grace of the Gospel, after destroying idols, the spells and practices of heathenism being made void: after the wizards' arts had been overcome...he departed to the Lord and slept in peace. And among choirs of angels he rejoiceth with them in his Lord's presence, deserving to behold Him...

[See Collection, Ref. No. 172]

Usually in this literature of the early medieval Irish period, the enchantingly beautiful music of the choirs of angels of



God's Heaven is thought of as coming from the first nine orders of angels, while the "music" of Lucifer's choirs is thought to emanate from the tenth order of angels--a "tenth earth grade", that of the human race, the dechmad grad talman.(4)

For other references that describe the Christian Heaven or Paradise itself and the role of supernatural music in it, see Collection references: 134, 143, 151, 154, 158, 159.

The Otherworld dimension of Hell, however, is often described as being without any music at all, or as having the dreadful sounds of the howls of the damned--clearly in great contrast to the above examples regarding Heaven. For example, from Fis Adamnan, "The Vision of St. Adamnan", Adamnan is shown Hell by an angel:

...Now while the saintly companies of the Heavenly Host sing joyfully and gladly the harmonious chorus of the canonical hours, praising the Lord, the souls give forth pitiful and grievous howls as they are beaten without respite by demons...

[See Collection, Ref. No. 134]

For another example regarding Hell, see Collection Ref. 159.

Another category frequently noted in the examples with overtly Christian contexts is that of supernatural, mysterious music--with no performer ever seen--described as being heard continuously around a saint. St. Colman is here described as a young boy:

...the boy was brought up piously and humbly; and wherever he used to be they would hear psalms and choral song, and the sound of a bell at every canonical hour, and the singing of mass every Sunday, so that people would come to ask, 'what was the assembly that came here last night?'...

[See Collection, Ref. No. 139]

It appears then as if Heaven, the Otherworld, was inches from his head, always in close proximity to the young St. Colman.

A frequent description of Paradise in this literature includes that of the Tree of Life and its musical birds of Paradise. In this example from the twelfth-century Saltair na Rann, the Irish Adam and Eve story, the Christian Paradise itself is described as having musical qualities:

...the King of the Tree of Life with its flowers, the space around which noble hosts were ranged, its crest and its showers on every side spread over the fields and plains of Heaven. On it sits a glorious flock of birds and sings perfect songs of purest grace; without withering, with choice bounty of fruit and leaves. Lovely is the flock of birds which keeps it, on every bright and goodly bird a hundred feathers; and without sin, with pure brilliance, they sing a hundred tunes for every feather...

[See Collection, Ref. No. 173]

Such a description of Paradise, or a Heavenly type of Otherworld, is clearly a joyful, radiant place; "the joys of this peaceful, fertile, musical place are described at length...the sound of the heavenly rejoicing is like the roaring of waters, the music of harps...the tree of life scatters its dew throughout Heaven, it nourishes a flock of birds...each wing sings a hundred songs. In conclusion, God is praised for all His works..." (5)

In an overtly primal context, the following example also uses tree imagery. Cathair, son of Fedilmid, king of Ireland from Alenn, had a dream and asked the king's chief druid to interpret it for him. The druid interprets the dream as meaning that Cathair will someday himself be king of Ireland-- the result of his druidic

analysis of the dream symbolism of the music coming from the crown of a tree in this example:

'A tree of gold on the hill free from battle,  
its crown reached the cloudy welkin;  
thence the music of the men of the world  
was heard from the tree's crown...

This is the storm-tossed tree of gold,  
branching wide, full of fruit--  
thyself in thy kingship over tuneful Banba  
and over every dwelling in Erin...

This is the stately music  
that was in the crown of the enduring tree--  
thy noble eloquence, lovelier thereby,  
when appeasing a multitude'...

[See Collection, Ref. Nos. 21-3]

For other examples, with primal contexts, that use tree imagery and music, see Collection references: 27, 41, 42, 65, 66, 77, 78, 110.

The Otherworld dimension, described in what appears to be the parallel in an overtly primal context of the voyage/vision literature portraying Christian saints, is also portrayed in this literature as having a musical or harmonic aspect. The following examples, from Imram Brain, "The Voyage of Bran", clearly show this belief about the Otherworld:

...Colours of every hue gleam  
throughout the soft familiar fields;  
ranked around the music, they are  
ever joyful in the plain south of Argatnel...

...There is no fierce harsh sound there, but  
sweet music striking the ear...

...Riches, treasure of every colour  
are in Ciuin, have they not been found?

Listening to sweet music  
drinking choicest wines...

...Listening to music in the night,  
and going to Ildathach,  
the many-coloured land,  
a brilliance with clear splendor  
from which the white cloud glistens...

[See Collection, Ref. Nos. 69-71; 74]

The Celtic Otherworld, although primarily conceived of as one supernatural realm, is often described as having various "subdivisions"--i.e., the above references mention particular Otherworld places called "Argatnel", "Ciuin", "Ildathach", "Mag Mell", etc. Most of these various Otherworld subdivisions mentioned in this literature involve mention at some point of a musical or harmonic aspect. Proinsias MacCana posits that in Immram Brain, the Otherworld place mentioned to Bran from the mysterious sidhe woman as "Mag Mell" could possibly be harmonized with the concept of the biblical terra repromissionis ("The Promised Land"). (6)

For other examples that involve supernatural music heard at overtly primal Otherworld location(s), please see Collection references: 9, 33, 72, 73, 94, 109, 120.

Another category that occurs with the examples in overtly primal contexts is that of a musical, shining Otherworld fountain and its streams. This fountain is often used in examples that also describe poetic lore in some manner. In the following example, King Cormac visits tir tairngiri, "The Land of Promise", and encounters this scene:

...Then he sees in the garth a shining fountain,  
with five streams flowing out of it, and the  
hosts in turn drinking its water. Nine hazels

of Buan grow over the well. The purple hazels drop their nuts into the fountain, and the five salmon which are in the fountain sever them and send their husks floating down the streams. Now the sound of the falling of those streams was more melodious than any music that men sing...

[See Collection, Ref. 57]

For another such example of a shining Otherworld fountain and music, see Collection Ref. No. 29.

Dr. Daithi O'hOgain describes sidhe dwellings as ... "beautiful places, decorated with precious metals and with sumptuous food and drink and melodious music..." (7) Such Otherworld places are portrayed as supernatural, and are often described as a sidhe hill-top, cairn, rath, an undersea world, and island paradise, or even from within a mountain. The fountains, with their musical qualities, also are part of such an Otherworld dimension.

In this section, then, it is mostly the otherworldly status of the place, however conveyed, that implies the supernatural status of the music.

#### Illustratory Comparative Material:

In other cultures we also find descriptions of certain supernatural locations or places as being strongly characterized as musical. Such well-known Otherworld realms as the Christian Heaven, the New Jerusalem, the Seven Heavens of Islam, Shangri-La, Shambhala, and the Judaic paradise, with its angelic orders surrounding the celestial Throne are often described as having a musical or harmonic quality. Generally in such descriptions, angels or sidhe-like beings play the music in these locations, or, mysterious music emanates from the Otherworld realm itself--a

location believed to be purely supernatural with its own music and harmony.

Celtic myth in general often makes reference to an undersea Otherworld, such as the folklore surrounding beautiful musical sounds heard from the submerged cathedral of Ys, the sunken Breton community beneath the waves. The folklore tales of the Irish hero Brian tell of his finding an undersea world while diving down deep into the ocean depths with a crystal diving helmet, to find an Otherworld dimension with red-haired nymphs making music sounding like chimes. (8)

References in world literature to the "music of the spheres" clearly refer to a supernatural Otherworld that involves planetary spheres, such as:

...The Pamphylian soldier in Plato's 'Myth of Er' saw the system of the seven planets and the fixed stars with a Siren standing on each sphere, 'uttering one tone varied by diverse modulations; and the whole eight of them together composed a single harmony'. Following in Plato's footsteps, Cicero also ended his Republic with a cosmic vision, though this time presented as a dream. Scipio Africanus, the Roman hero, saw nine spheres (including the Earth) making a 'grand and pleasing sound'... (9)

Jewish rabbinical tradition states that in the world-to-come, the soul will hear the supernatural musical scale of the Afterlife, "which is above this physical world...those who merit reward in the Afterlife will no longer be limited by the dimensions of time and space...and will retrovert to the supernatural source from whence we came"... (10) This supernatural source is believed to have a musical quality. The writings of the Kabbalah ultimately see a vision of a world in which not only angels sing, but the stars,

planetary spheres, the merkavah [chariot-thrones], the trees of the Garden of Eden, the animals, and therefore portray a singing Universe in praise of God. Martin Buber comments about this special secret melody in relation to the beliefs of the Hasidim, regarding their esoteric custom of working on various Hebrew letter combinations:

From time immemorial speech was for the Jewish mystic a rare and awe-inspiring thing...The word is an abyss through which the speaker strides...He who knows the secret melody that bears the inner into the outer, who knows the holy song that merges the lonely, shy letters into the singing of the spheres, he is full of the power of God...(11)

Thus, it appears that mystical Jewish tradition certainly acknowledges that their holy Otherworld consists of some type of a musical and/or harmonic quality--a "holy song" of Yahweh. An example of this concept is their view of the Otherworldly place of the Heavenly hierarchy of God's choirs and angels, which surround the Throne of Glory--the Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominations, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, and angels--all in constant song, making this Otherworld dimension very musical indeed.

Islam, too, has references to the supernatural presence of and power of music in Allah's Paradise. The poetic verse of the famous Sufi poet Rumi (1207-73) in his work entitled Mathnawi IV, 735-7, comments on the purpose for the sama dance of the 'Whirling Dervishes':

We all have been parts of Adam, we have  
heard those melodies in Paradise.  
Although the water and earth of our bodies

have caused a doubt to fall upon us,  
 something of those melodies comes back  
 to our memory. (12)

Thus, the Sufi view of Paradise also acknowledges a supernatural musical quality that is inherently in it, as "we have all heard those melodies in Paradise." It also seems from their early medieval literature, that the ancient Irish couldn't have agreed more. The medieval Welsh literature, too, has some references to the supernatural birds of Rhiannon, and of the famous poetic verse of Taliesin, which describes the realm of Annwfn, the Welsh conception of the island Otherworld.

#### B. LIMINAL PLACES WHERE MUSIC IS HEARD

##### Introduction:

Certain places in the literature of early medieval Ireland may be classified as liminal. Liminal locations are those ordinary places which, because of their inherent characteristic of 'limit' or 'boundary', are natural symbols of transcendence. Examples might be a cave or hillside hollow entrance, a doorway threshold, a window sill, a certain ford in a river or a certain crossroads location. As one might expect, at such places supernatural music is more likely to be heard if the circumstances are right, and if and when such a transcendental event might occur, the supernatural music tends to confirm their liminal status, as indeed the liminal status of a place may confirm the listener's expectation that the music heard at that boundary is supernatural. For instance, one is more likely to hear supernatural music at the entrance to a cave or



hollow into a hillside or mountain, than on an ordinary hill.

Liminal places are very frequently mentioned in Irish folklore; in this literature of the early medieval Irish period, they are occasionally mentioned and less frequent. Nonetheless, we have a few examples of liminal locations, those places where the normal boundaries symbolize those less visible boundaries which separate our everyday, mundane reality from another supernatural reality, so that the latter cease to exist, or, are made very flexible. But to qualify as liminal per se, a 'limit' or specific 'boundary' line of some type must be present to be crossed over. As the early Irish were reluctant to draw an explicit line between exactly where this world ends and where the supernatural Otherworld dimension begins, these liminal places are therefore important, as these liminal places seem to serve as special gateways connecting this world to the supernatural Otherworld. They are therefore viewed as especially powerful locations, and their crossing quite significant.

In the following example, from the fifteenth-century Book of Lismore, we have an anecdote attributed to St. Brendan regarding the appearance, one day, of a shining bird on the edge of his window sill, which declared itself to be St. Michael, and made the most beautiful music he had ever heard. The tale begins with a student harpist who wishes to play for St. Brendan; Brendan resists, claiming he has heard the greatest music of all, saying:

...I saw a shining bird at the window...  
I was unable to look at it because of  
the rays which surrounded it, like those

of the sun...`who are you?' said Brennain.  
 `The angel Michael,' it said, `come to  
 speak with you.' `I give thanks to  
 God for speaking with you,' said  
 Brennain, `and why have you come?'  
 `To bless you and make music for  
 you for your Lord,' said the bird...  
 [says St. Brennain to the student  
 harper:]...`After that music, no  
 music of the world seems any  
 sweeter to me.

[Collection Ref. No. 137]

One may note that in this instance, the appearance of the shining musical bird was at the window's edge, a natural boundary point, much like a doorway threshold. The bird then crosses this window sill, enters into the everyday, mundane life of St. Brendan's world, and then sits on St. Brendan's altar. Having done so, he crossed over from God's Otherworldly, shining dimension into our this-worldly dimension; the window serving as a type of "border" point between the two worlds. This bird, stating to St. Brendan that he was St. Michael in disguise, was located at the place where this world and the sacred Otherworld intermeshed, a liminal place.

Another example comes from Accallam na Senorach, ("The Colloquy of the Ancient Men"), where a wee sidhe harpist named Cnu Deroil emerges from the entrance of his Otherworld home, a hollow or cave on the side of the mountain named Slievenaman. He belongs with the traditional folklore classification of an Otherworld sidhe being who lives within a mountain or hill. The last remaining mythological aged Fianna warriors recount their discovery of this musician and place:

...We were, along with Finn, betwixt the crota and

Slievenaman; when on the green bank near beside us there we heard a perfect music. To him we listened then--his melody admitted not of indifference--it lacked but little that the swelling music, well sustained, had lulled us all to sleep. Cumail's son Finn of Almha spoke out clearly then and said, 'whence comest thou, small man, that with a touch so smooth and deft playest the harp?' 'Out of Slievenaman come I'...Four fists were in the stature of the man, three in his harp so mild and dear: full-volumed was the sound of the soft delicate instrument, sweet the outpourings of his little harp. The five musicians of the Fianna were in a body brought to him; so that in those yonder parts from Cnu in gentle wise we learned a sidhe music.

[See Collection Ref. No. 90]

Here, the wee sidhe musician says that he clearly comes from 'out of' Slievenaman, implying that his home is within. Later in various tales, Cnu Deroil's bewitching sidhe music is sometimes heard, yet he himself is never seen. In the above instance he himself is seen, and he states directly that he resides within a mountain, shleib ban, ["Slievenaman"]. In order to play for the Fianna, who are in this world, he had to cross the border from his hillside Otherworld home into our own mundane, everyday world, over the threshold of a hillside cave entrance.

One other example from the Collection refers to supernatural music heard at the doorway of a sidhe fort. In the following excerpt, men in a boat out at sea encounter a sidhe woman's home on an island, and hear harmonious music coming from the net that is over its entrance at the doorway:

...She went from them and closed the noble pleasant fort: her net, manifesting mighty power, chanted good harmonious music...

(See Collection Ref. No. 109)

Here again, the doorway, like the window sill above, serves as a clear boundary point from the world of everyday reality, and the world of the sidhe woman's abode. A musical net hangs over the entrance. This entrance to the Otherworld realm, her doorway, is a liminal place, and is also here described as being a place of 'coming over' of supernatural music. [As scholars debate whether all of the Immrana tales are to be interpreted as being entirely in the realm of the visionary or supernatural or not, for our purposes here, I have included this one particular example to illustrate the liminal concept.]

#### Illustratory Comparative Material:

Such liminal places are also referred to in world literature. One example also comes from Irish folklore, involving the site of Tory Hole, Slieve Rushen in County Cavan. Tory Hole, a cave in the hillside, is the focus of the following account given by an informant to the Irish Folklore Commission in 1938:

...The Tory Hole--as a certain mountain cavern in the townland of Aughkinnigh is called, is known locally as an abode of the fairies and many are the tales woven about it by the old seanchaigh of the locality...Many years ago...one of the fiddlers went in to play a few tunes inside the Tory Hole. He was never seen again. Many a day since, and hundreds of years have gone by, the strains of fiddler's music have been heard coming from the Tory Hole. The fiddler liked the company of the fairies and has never since asked to leave. (13)

Like the mountain home of Cnu Deroil, the Tory Hole is a hillside cavern or hollow, where it is believed that a 'line' is crossed into the abode of the sidhe. The world inside the hill or mountain is clearly something different than our mundane, everyday

world, and once this line is crossed, there is no turning back to this world.

Legends of music emanating from the caves of nymphs in antiquity are similar to tales from the northern parts of the Netherlands, where according to Corneil van Kempen, such beings were called "Dames Blanches", the "White Ladies". They were believed to live in caves, a type of liminal location for occasionally hearing strange, supernatural music. "They lived in caves, and they would attack people who would travel at night. The shepherds would also be harassed. And the women who had newly born babies had to be very careful, for they were quick in stealing the children away. In their lair, one could hear all sort of strange noises, indistinct words that no one could understand and musical sounds." (14)

From Scottish folklore, we have a description of the arrival of the musician Thomas the Rhymer, of Ercildourne in the Borders, to the gates of the Otherworld realm of Elfin Land. While resting at Huntlie Bank, at the foot of the Eildon Hills, Thomas idly plucked his lute during a break on his journey. Soon, he suddenly became aware of a beautiful lady on a white steed, wearing a green mantle. She asks him to play his lute for her, and he does so, eventually agreeing to go with her to her home in Elfin Land. They ride through the forest, and soon Thomas lost track of where he was, although he thought he knew the area very well as he lived nearby. As Thomas and the Elfin Queen keep riding through the wilderness, the borders between this world and the Otherworld of

Elfin Land become very flexible; Thomas and the Elfin Queen then arrive:

....at last they reached the gates of Elfin Land, where a thousand faery trumpets proclaimed their approach, and they passed into an enchanted country filled with a splendid light...(15)

This liminal place in the wilderness--the "gates" of Elfin Land--is a border line where Thomas crossed from this world into the world of the sidhe, Elfin Land. Once he crossed this line, i.e., went through the gates, there was no turning back. He was now in the place of the "enchanted country"--Elfin Land. Thomas then stayed in Elfin Land, and served the Elfin Queen with his music for seven years, eventually returning to Ercildourne with the gift of prophecy, most of which were in rhymes. Again and again many were proved right, and he thus became known as "Thomas the Rhymer".

Liminal places are also described in the Breton folktales. The following example describes the activities of the corrigans, a race of Otherworldly beings similar to the Irish sidhe:

...Like the fairies in Britain and Ireland, the corrigans find their favorite amusement in the circular dance. When the moon is clear and bright they gather for their frolic near menhirs and dolmens, and tumuli, and at cross-roads...and they never miss an opportunity of enticing a mortal passing by to join them...[and, from an informant at Carnac in 1909]...`the corrigans are little dwarfs who formerly, by moonlight, used to dance in a circle...They sang a song...they whistled in order to assemble; where they danced mushrooms grew, and it was necessary to maintain silence so as not to interrupt them at their dance...the corrigans dress in very coarse white linen cloth. They were mischievous spirits ['esprits follets'] who lived under dolmens'...(16)

The corrigans live under dolmens in their Otherworld sidhe dimension, as described in the above example; they tend to gather

at stone circles, like Carnac, to dance and play their music, and at crossroads--clearly a liminal place. That supernatural music might be heard at such a place is not as surprising as compared to that of a non-liminal place, like an ordinary rock or road.

### C. EVERYDAY PLACES WHERE MUSIC IS HEARD

#### Introduction:

Everyday places in this literature of early Ireland are described as places where music is heard, performed, and enjoyed. Such locations might be a king's court, a battlefield, a fair, a monastery or church, a nobleman's house, a field, a hermit monk's hut, or a hill, mountain, river or earth mound. Such normal, mundane everyday places can even occasionally function as a site where unusual transcendent experiences might occur involving supernatural music, in the course of one's everyday life, but certainly not very often. These places in everyday life are distinguished from the liminal category in that they do not have an inherent 'limit' or 'boundary' to them, but simply exist as a location in everyday life. In these places the presumption is that the music heard is of quite mundane source and quality. However, some places or features of the landscape, are natural symbols of the supernatural, either because they are known to be ancient sacral sites (or contemporary ones such as churches) or, because their physical attributes of height or depth (hills, springs) make them natural symbols of the divine heights or depths of the reality we all share. Dr. Daithi O'hOgain, in making reference to such everyday locations in early Irish life, lists some of the more

common types of such sites, many of which are also described in folklore as being somehow related to the sidhe: "...it may be a 'fairy rath' (an ancient tumulus or relic of an earthenwork fort), a riverside (water being anciently associated with Celtic deities), or a cairn or a hilltop. The fact is that...the locations are the same as those involved in ancient seer-craft..." (17) The general presumption is that music heard in such places is itself mundane; however, the presumption may be defeated by some unusual features of the music, and more easily defeated in places of natural sacral significance.

In the more overtly Christian contexts, notably the monastic poetry of the hermit monks, great appreciation in everyday life of the "music" of the natural elements in praise of God is shown. This may be seen with the following reference from the eleventh-century poem attributed to St. Columcille, entitled "An Exile's Dream":

...To Mag nEolairg, by Benevenagh,  
across Lough Foyle, where I might  
hear tuneful music from the swans...

...The sound of the wind in the elm making  
music for us, and the startled cry of  
the pleasant grey blackbird when she  
has clapped her wings...

(See Collection, Ref. No. 108)

These places are simply mentioned here as a normal part of the everyday life and worship of God's creation of a Christian hermit monk, and not as specifically supernatural in any way. For other examples of hermit poetry regarding music in everyday life, please



see Collection references 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 106, 107, 108, 111, 112, 113, 114.

From Betha Patraic, "The Life of Patrick", we have mention of the location of the hill of Cashel as a musical place using an overtly Christian context:

...Patrick's resurrection in Down,  
His primacy in Armagh,  
On the hillock of musical Cashel  
He granted a third of his grace...

(See Collection, Ref. No. 163)

Here the hill of Cashel is simply referred to as a musical place known and appreciated by the Christians in their everyday life; it is not portrayed here as being particularly supernatural in any way. However, the hill/mound imagery is significant.

Music in and around monasteries and churches, too, is portrayed in the overtly Christian examples as being highly appreciated in everyday life. The monks would constantly sing at the canonical hours and at Mass. Collection reference number 161, cited earlier in detail in the Performers chapter, describes the young St. Mochuda as a boy explaining to the king about why we had been gone so long, causing worry and consternation to loved ones. He tells the king of the beautiful, melodious singing of the clerics around the environment of a monastery. He then decides to become a monk based on this experience; later, he becomes a saint.

Music around a saint and his or her environment is also described in some of the Irish saint's lives of the early medieval period. For instance, St. Moling is described as having a rather

unusual "pet"--a musical fly, that was known to always be in his vicinity. (See Collection, Ref. No. 162)

Mountains, and especially mountain-tops, are described as places where a saint might go to commune with God and pray in the Irish saint's lives. Sometimes certain mountains are also described as places conducive to music, where saints like to go and chant the psalms. In Collection Ref. No. 165, for example, St. Patrick sings maledictive psalms against demonic black birds on the mountain top called Cruachan Aigle. Later, God rewards him with the beautiful singing of white birds.

Everyday life in and around the Christian monastic communities is often described as musical in some way, especially regarding chanting in or around the church or monastery itself. Sometimes, a saint is portrayed as chanting protective psalms at a monastery site, as in Collection Ref. No. 157.

Such appreciation of what is described as the "music" of the smith's making bells for the church (Collection Ref. No. 170) and the clergy out at sea, listening to the "music" of their hammers as they make their fishing nets (Collection Ref. Nos. 80-1) do not show a supernatural characteristic per se, yet use similar imagery of places encountered in everyday life--out at sea, or in a monastic environment. Here this similar imagery is merely mentioned as being an integral part of mundane, everyday, earthly life and is described as having a highly appreciated musical element to it as well.

The more overtly primal examples also show music being an

integral part of everyday life and describe the places where it is heard. Chief among these are battlefields, the courts of kings, fairs, mountains, hills, lakes, forests, etc. Although some of the following primal context examples do not mention anything supernatural about them, others do describe the occasional unusual experience that someone encounters in the course of their everyday business. The imagery is markedly consistent with some of that used in the earlier categories, tending towards a certain continuity from the everyday mundane examples right through to the supernatural ones.

Battlefields and the "music" of the swords is described as part of everyday life in the following reference to the feats of the hero Conall from Cath Ruis na Riq for Boinn, "The Battle of Ross Na Rig on the Boyne":

...It is then that Conall drew the sharp long sword out of its sheath of war, and played the music of his sword on the armies. The ring of Conall's sword was heard throughout the battalions on both sides, at that moment of time. However, as soon as they heard the music of Conall's sword, they quaked...

(See Collection Ref. No. 32)

For another overtly primal context example that uses the imagery of swords and the location of a battlefield, please see Collection reference numbers: 2, 32, 37, 40, 43, 51, 64.

The sound of the anvils of the smiths making weapons at the site of a battlefield is described in this ninth-century poem from the Book of Leinster. It describes the location of the Hill of Alenn, and early Irish site of kingship:

...The music of its bent hard anvils, the sound of its songs from the tongues of poets, the fire of its men at the great contest, the beauty of its women at the high assembly...Its lovely melodies at every hour...

(See Collection Ref. No. 131)

Kings' courts were popular places in early medieval Ireland for a great variety of everyday musical activities, as one might expect. The court of the king Ailill in the province of Connacht is frequently mentioned in the early Irish literature as the site of much musical activity. From the Accalam na Senorach ("Colloquy of the Ancient Men"), we have the following description of the music of kings' courts, as recalled by Caeilte, an aged, mythological surviving Fianna warrior, while telling St. Patrick of the days of old:

...Three sorts of music, and O music of three kinds, that comely kings enjoyed! Music of harps [crot], music of timpanis [timpan] and the humming [dord] of Trogan's son Fer-tuinne.

(See Collection Ref. No. 96)

For those references from the Collection which refer to normal, everyday music and musicians at a king's court, please see numbers: 4, 5, 35, 36, 45, 96.

But sometimes in everyday life, a king could encounter something unusual regarding music, but not very often. We have, from the Collection, a sterling example of this phenomenon, where king Cormac and his court receive an unusual visitor from an unknown place; when questioned, this man said he was Manannan, from tir tairngiri ("The Land of Promise"). Understandably surprised, king Cormac then encountered the following at his court, and later

followed Manannan to his Otherworld stone fort:

..A branch of silver with three golden apples was on his [Manannan's] shoulder. Delight and amusement enough it was to listen to the music made by the branch, for men sore-wounded, or women in child-bed, or folk in sickness would fall asleep at the melody which was made when that branch was shaken...

(See Collection Ref. No. 56)

This unusual day resulted in king Cormac's own court being the place where a transcendental event occurred, as the king receives a mysterious stranger who has with him a magical, musical branch. He later goes with Manannan to visit tir tairngiri, something he clearly had not planned on. The musical branch seems to serve as a type of passport to the Otherworld. Such "interventions" by supernatural forces in the everyday life of a king--many of which are musical in some way--occur in this literature of early medieval Ireland. For other such descriptions from the Collection which portray a king's court being the focus of an unusual everyday experience involving music, please see Collection reference numbers: 3, 44, 46, 47, 56, 58, 67, 68, 75, 91, 92, 93.

The home of a nobleman was also a place where music was heard as part of everyday, earthly life in early medieval Ireland, as exemplified by the following reference from Esnada Tige Buchet, "The Songs of Buchet's House":

...The song of Buchet's house to the companies; his laughing cry to the companies: `Welcome to you! It will be well to you with us! Let it then be well to us with you! The song of the fifty warriors with their purple garments and their armours, to make music...The song, too, of the fifty maidens in the midst of the house, in their purple dresses, with their golden-yellow manes over their garments, and their song delighting the host. The song of the fifty harps afterwards till

morning, soothing the host with music. Hence is the name 'The Songs of Buchet's House'...

(See Collection Ref. No. 59)

The site of the seasonal fairs of the people, such as Carmun or Taltiu, are also mentioned in the literature as being musical environments as part of everyday life experience. From the place-lore, the Metrical Dindshenchas, we have the following reference to the "music" of the chariots at the fair of Taltiu:

...White-sided Taltiu uttered in her land a true prophecy,  
that so long as every prince should accept her,  
Erin should not be without perfect song.  
A fair with gold, with silver, with games,  
with music of chariots,  
with adornment of body and soul by means  
of knowledge and eloquence...

(See Collection Ref. No. 30)

For other overtly primal examples that use the location of a fair, please see Collection reference numbers: 12, 13.

A particular mountain called Slieve Brey is referred to as being "music-haunted" in the following example, from the late twelfth-century poem entitled "Suibne in the Snow":

...From the Knockmealdown mountains (it is no easy  
expedition) I come to the river in pleasant Gaille.  
From the Gaille river (though it is a long journey)  
I make my way east to music-haunted Slieve Brey...

(See Collection Ref. No. 119)

Trees and/or tree groves are sometimes described as places where music might be heard in everyday life, where musicians would play, and, rarely, as a place where an unusual type of event might occur--where one may either hear mysterious music at that site as part of everyday life experience or perhaps encounter a

supernatural musician there. One such occasion is from Cath Maige Mucrama ("The Battle of Mag Mucrama") which describes Eogan and Lugaid, on their way to visit Art, son of Conn, and they come up to a particular "clump of yew" by a river:

...as they came along the flat land by the river,  
 in a clump of yew that overhung a certain rapid  
 water they heard music. Back to [king] Oilioll  
 then they convey a wee man whom they had plucked  
 out of the clump...

(See Collection Ref. No. 54)

Other earth-oriented locations like forests, trees and hills are also mentioned as part of everyday, mundane, earthly life in the overtly primal examples. For the other overtly primal context references from the Collection that use such earth-oriented imagery as forests, trees, or hills as part of everyday, mundane life, please see reference numbers: 62, 112, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 122, 123, 124, 125, 127, 129, 130, 132. For those references that use the places of fields or plains, see numbers 14, 16, and 24.

Water-oriented locations like lakes and rivers are also used in some of the overtly primal examples. The waters of Assaroe in southwest Ireland in particular are referred to as being especially musical. In one example from Accalam na Senorach ("The Colloquy of the Ancient Men"), the waters of Assaroe are featured as being a place where one might have the opportunity to hear the music of the sidhe, from tir tairngiri, as did the Fianna warriors one day:

...they heard a sound, a gush of music, draw near  
 from the water of Assaroe: melody for sake of  
 which one would have abandoned the whole world's  
 various strains...`it was Uainebhuidhe out of  
 the sidh of Dorn buidhe from Cleena's Wave in  
 the south, and with her the birds of tir tairngiri,  
 she being minstrel of that entire country...

(See Collection Ref. No. 88)

From the mid-twelfth century poem about the river Garb entitled, "The Cry of the Garb", a hermit monk comments that he feels that the music of the river Garb is superior:

...Though many things be told of the falls  
as Ess Maige, at Ess Dubthaige, and at Assaroe  
to which salmon run, the voice of the Garb is  
more musical...

The strong prophesied Watercourse, its high  
cascade is tuneful! The angelic Tacarda--what  
cascade is purer in cry?...

(See Collection Ref. No. 114)

For other examples from the Collection that use water-oriented imagery and music as part of everyday life in an overtly primal context, please see Collection reference numbers: 111, 112, 113, 114, 121, 122.

The sea itself is often described as an everyday place that is musical, with most references acknowledging the pleasant sounds of the waves as a type of "music" of the sea. Sometimes, though, even in going about one's everyday business out at sea, the rare occasion where the music of the mermaids might be heard occurs, as in the following example from the Dindshenchas referring to Port Lairge (modern-day Waterford):

...and there he heard the sound,  
it was a lure of baleful might,  
the chant of the mermaids of the sea  
over the pure-sided waves...  
The hosts of the world would fall asleep  
listening to their voice and their clear notes...

(See Collection Ref. No. 27)

Lakes and rivers are often designated in the Dindshenchas as occasionally being everyday places where supernatural music might



possibly be heard, if one were fortunate enough. For example, in the following reference from Serqlige Con Cuchulainn ("The Wasting Sickness of Cuchulainn"), singing sidhe birds from the Otherworld come over a loch where Cuchulainn tells his wife Eithne:

...`If in the future any birds come to Mag Muirthemne or to the Boyne, the two birds that are the most beautiful among those that come shall be thine.'  
A little while after this they saw two birds flying over the lake, linked together by a chain of red gold. They sang a gentle song, and a sleep fell upon all the men who were there...

(See Collection Ref. No. 38)

For other examples from the Collection which use lake imagery and supernatural music, please see numbers 19 and 28. For a reference to a well and supernatural music, see number 6.

#### Illustratory Comparative Material:

The literature of other cultures also attests to the value placed on music in everyday, earthly life at certain locations. For example, the Bible has many references to the enjoyment of music in the everyday life of Moses and the Israelites during their time in the desert. In Exodus 15, the "Song of Victory" is sung to Yahweh; in Exodus 15:20, the famous incident occurs where Miriam, the prophetess and sister of Aaron, "took up a tambourine, and all the women followed her with tambourines, dancing, while Miriam took up from them the refrain..." and they all sang praises to Yahweh.

An interesting incident occurs in Numbers 21:16 where Moses sings at a particular location named Beer to summon up a well in the desert, as part of the everyday life of the wandering

Israelites. Music mentioned in relation to battle is often referred to in the Old Testament in particular, for example in Numbers 31:6, where Moses and the Israelites prepare for war with Midian by "carrying the sacred objects and the trumpets for the battle cry". One particular Jewish tradition, "reported by the Italian Rabbi Moscato (sixteenth century) is that Joshua heard the pleasant melody of the Sun in the middle of battle with the Amorites and was seriously distracted, which is why he said, 'Sun stand thou still upon Gibeon' (Joshua 10:12), meaning, 'Stop singing!'"(18)--a example of supernatural music intervening into everyday life experience, even in the midst of battle.

Chinese emperors in ancient China employed very large numbers of musicians to entertain the court as part of normal everyday life. The T'ang Dynasty (A.D.618-907) "kept no less than fourteen court orchestras, each consisting of from five hundred to seven hundred performers...yet, according to the ancients, to keep so many musicians was far from unnecessary or superfluous, but was the height of wisdom. For the energy invoked by the divinely-attuned tone-patterns of these court orchestras was believed to exert a far-reaching influence into all of the affairs of the nation..." (19) The Chinese historians recorded that for the solstices and other important fairs and festivals, the T'ang Dynasty also brought together an orchestra numbering no less than ten thousand.

The great Highland families of Scotland employed harpists as part of everyday life, and they were greatly valued in carrying on the ancient Bardic tradition. "...It is clear that a harpists would

have been an accepted member of any household of rank...One of these noble households would have been at Kildrummy Castle in Strathdon, the 13th-century castle of the Earls of Mar. This was held by Alexander Stewart, the Wolf of Badenoch, fourth son of Robert II. His son, also Alexander Stewart, who lived from c.1375-1435, apparently employed a harper named Duncan...This man must have been of some standing, since after the fall from power of his patron, in 1438, the Crown awarded him lands at Wester Cloveth, near Kildrummy, to support him in the poor straits in which he now found himself. The King, after all, was also a Stewart, and a close relative of Mar." (20) Harpists were obviously greatly valued in everyday life at the castles of the great Highland families.

One instance from the folklore of everyday life in nineteenth century Wales tells of a place on a particular mountain, where a man was gone for three weeks, his family giving him up for dead:

...A man who lived at Ystradfynlais...[was] going out one day to look after his cattle and sheep on the mountain and disappeared. In about three weeks, after a search had been made in vain for him and his wife had given him up for dead, he came home. His wife asked him where he had been...he told her he had been playing his flute, which he usually took with him on the mountain, at the Llorfa, a spot near the Van Pool, when he was surrounded at a distance by little beings like men, who closed nearer and nearer to him until they became a very small circle. They sang and danced, and so affected him that he quite lost himself. They offered him some small cakes to eat, of which he partook; and he had never enjoyed himself so much in his life...(21)

Music as part of everyday life of ancient India "was divided into three general classes: the classical raga, the purely sacred music (vocal chants to deities)...and folk music...However, it

could be argued that in order to [today] experience the total, committed atmosphere of Indian music, there exists no replacement for hearing it in its natural environment, as the holy men of the hills chant their morning rituals, or as the musicians of the local village spontaneously gather at sunset for the sounding out of the tones of the hour"...(22) Many of these same types of places--the hills or mountains, the local village, etc. are similar to those described in much of world folklore, including that of early Ireland.

### Conclusion

The places where music is heard in the literature of early medieval Ireland vary from the purely supernatural to mundane, everyday life. The locations in category I--those purely Otherworldly places--range from the Christian Heaven to tir tairngiri and the world of the sidhe. These supernatural places are described as having musical qualities. The supernatural nature of the place makes its music seem supernatural as well. In the more overtly Christian examples, Heaven or God's Paradise is often described in terms of a celestial hierarchy, with angels playing, singing, and chanting music to God in loving devotion, each according to their rank and station in the angelic hierarchy.

Many descriptive terms of the primal Otherworld are also often described in terms of various "subdivisions", ranging from the familiar tir tairngiri ("The Land of Promise"), to mag mell ("The Pleasant Plain"), tir na nOg ("The Land of Youth") tir innambeo ("The Land of the Living") and so on. The term sidhe, as previously discussed in full in the Performers chapter, also applies here to those Otherworld places where the sidhe beings might play music or be heard. Thomas O'Cathasaigh, in an article

entitled "The Semantics of Sid", shows how, linguistically, the Old Irish term sid can mean both 1) an Otherworld hill or mound; and 2) peace/peaceful. (23) As we have seen, much of the purely supernatural Otherworld is described as having musical qualities, and, often, such music is described as being an integral part of the Otherworld, be it in an overtly Christian or more overtly primal context.

Category II--the liminal places--pertains to certain everyday places or location where, because of their natural 'limit' or 'boundary' characteristic(s), are a natural symbol of transcendence. Such places might be a doorway, a window sill, a cave opening at the side of a mountain, or a crossroads, etc. At such places, one might expect to have the opportunity to hear supernatural music more often than at a location that does not have this inherent transcendental potential. Liminality, then, implies transcendence, and by hearing such unusual supernatural music there, this tends to confirm their liminal status. We saw examples from Betha Brennain ("The Life of St. Brendan"), and from the more overtly primal references which spoke of the entrances to the abodes of the sidhe beings--those liminal places where music is heard, and where the borders and boundaries of everyday consciousness is crossed, providing entry into another reality. Such places serve as a type of portal or bridge between this world and the Otherworld, and often this border itself is clearly mentioned--i.e., on one side of the mountain, the outside, is our normal, earthly reality, yet, "inside" the mountain, i.e., once

the entry to the sidhe dwelling has occurred, and the crossing over is completed, and the sidhe door closed, another reality is predominant. [One is here reminded of the famous tale about Fionn mac Cumhaill, who got his thumb "stuck" in a sidhe door entrance on a hillside mound. Thereafter, he had his famous "Thumb of Knowledge", as he had contacted a boundary point between this world and the Otherworld.] And once a sidhe resident "crosses over the threshold" of his dwelling, and enters the outside world, he enters our earthly, this-worldly reality. In this Collection, at such liminal places, or, only after such places have been crossed over, is supernatural music heard or described. Thus, the shining, musical bird that came to St. Brendan from Heaven, saying he was St. Michael in disguise, appeared at the window sill--the edge of the bird's world of God's Heaven, and once he crossed over and came inside, he entered the everyday dimension of our mundane, earthly existence. But pertaining to supernatural music and liminal places, it seems as though it only is heard either 1) at the actual liminal site itself; or 2) only right after the border/door/boundary is crossed over, and the musician is very close nearby and performs.

Category III--places where music is heard in everyday life--consist of a broad range of locations such as king's courts, the homes of noblemen and the people, at hills, mountains, monasteries and churches, rivers, lochs, trees, the fairs and festivals of the people, etc. The early Irish society is portrayed as being very highly appreciative of music and the Collection is rich with varied examples of this attitude. Sometimes, in everyday life, one might

even encounter mysterious supernatural music emanating from a place one would normally pass by every day--reading through and analyzing this material in the Collection, one gets the distinct impression that in everyday life in ancient Ireland, one never knows for sure when or where something from the Otherworld might intervene into the affairs of everyday life. Many times, such places became known as rather unusual places, because it was reported more often than once, and by more than one person over time. At such normal, everyday sites, Christian or primal, one might possibly have the opportunity to hear supernatural music there, but certainly not always. Such a place, in everyday life, is considered to be a normal location and rather non-eventful, but, occasionally, something "intervenes" from another dimension, often with music being the vehicle for this. It is as though the early Irish felt that music itself somehow could serve as a direct vehicle to the divine, and were sometimes in awe of its power in this regard. The places which became associated with unusual occurrences regarding supernatural music often became enshrined in the Metrical Dindshenchas, the place-lore. An example might be Keshcorran, entitled in Irish "Ceis Choraínd" in Ed Gwynn's version of the Dindshenchas, which was named because the talented harper Corainn had an encounter with a deadly dragon there.

The theme of water-oriented places and music occurs throughout this literature. Notably, springs, the sea, lochs, wells, and fountains are mentioned. The water imagery used is often quite consistent, no matter what the context; for example, the

supernatural fountains of tir tairngiri as witnessed by king Cormac, or the Christian clergymen's adventure of hearing the mermaids sing while out at sea on down to the ordinary descriptions of music heard around lochs and rivers of everyday life. The waters of Assaroe in southwestern Ireland in particular are portrayed in this literature as occasionally being an everyday place where one might possibly encounter the music of tir tairngiri, the Land of Promise. Later, the same place is described in a more simple, mundane manner, i.e., referring to its waterfalls as having an inherent harmonic or musical quality, to be experienced in everyday life.

It does seem clear that the early Irish were reluctant to draw an absolutely explicit line between this world and the Otherworld, and there are a fair number of such places in reference to normal, everyday life that indicate that they seemed to feel that the Otherworld itself permeates in and around our everyday, mundane world in a unique interplay, and, as such, one could never be sure exactly when or where one might have an encounter with Otherworld and its music. We are thus left with the impression that everyday life itself was a bit of an adventure, as compared to materialistic modern twentieth-century life and consciousness. But, of course, certain features of the landscape, ancient sacral sites, heights and depths, are more easily associated with music of super-natural origin or status; and these are found throughout the land.

Earth-oriented imagery, too, is markedly consistent throughout the Collection references to music. Such earth-oriented sites might be a hill, mountain, plain or field, mound, cairn, rath, a



certain stone, or a tree or grove of trees, etc. In the supernatural category I examples, we have several references to the shining Tree of Life with its musical birds in the Christian Land of the Saints and Heaven, and in the supernatural primal contexts, we have the "three trees of purple glass" in the Otherworld realm of mag mell, as described to Cuchulainn by his charioteer Loeg, the tree with music at its crown, as seen by Cathair, son of Fedilmid in a dream. In everyday life, too, trees and music are mentioned-- by the hermit monks in relation to monastic life, and, for example, the yew trees referred to when the wee sidhe harper Fer Fi, son of Eogobal, was found. The hermit monks often refer to the "music of the pines" as part of everyday medieval Irish monastic life; "the Jesuit Athanasius Kircher (1602-80) accepted this idea, as he did so many ancient musical myths, saying that the wind in pine-trees does actually have this effect if the trees themselves are of suitably porportionate heights." (24) The Book of Lecan [fol. 193, 183(174)v(370)b] in one of the Irish Apocryphal works, entitled, "The Mystical Tree", gives further descriptions of such a tree in the Christian Paradise. (25) This theme of a tree in Paradise is well-known in world literature, and in both classical and post-Latin poetry in particular. (26) The Saltair na Rann, the Irish Adam and Eve story, contains references to music in Paradise, [see Ref. No. 173] and the theme of the musical Tree of Life and its singing birds of Paradise. (27)

One can thus notice a double parallelism throughout this literature and in what the early Irish seem to believe about music

and their perspective of everyday life. 1) Basically, it appears that they felt that there was a continuous line of influence from the Otherworld to this world, which at the right location and under the correct circumstances, could meet and encounter each other. This continuity is seen both in the parallelism of the details in supernatural and mundane places, and in the liminal encounters. For example, as we have seen, the imagery of the Tree of Life of the Christian Heaven with its singing birds is used in some of the examples from everyday life, where the music of the birds on trees is described in a similar manner. Likewise, the tree imagery is also used in some of the primal context examples when describing the music of the Otherworld. When these categories are placed side by side, as we have seen, one can notice a certain parallelism in imagery and description from the Otherworld places to the locations described as exclusively from everyday, mundane life experience. Overall, it seems that the early Irish felt that the Otherworld could intervene occasionally into the everyday affairs of humanity, and they seem to believe that music is an especially effective vehicle for this. It appears that the early Irish believed that music has, more often than not, a linkage or connection to the Otherworld. It appears that music was taken more seriously in their society, and not regarded as only mere entertainment, as is more common in our modern society today, due to their belief in the power of music. In the purely supernatural and liminal place categories especially, one can see that the early Irish felt there was a continuous connecting to a divine source through music.

2) A second parallelism applies to the overtly Christian contexts (i.e., angel harpists in Heaven) and the overtly primal contexts. (the sidhe harpists in the tir tairngiri fort of Manannan, for example). In such examples, the same details are often used, i.e., the same types of musical instruments played, similar landscape descriptions, etc. As we have seen, when these categories are placed side by side, we often see similar imagery used, such as water-oriented details (lochs, rivers, fountains) or earth-oriented details (hills, mountains, stones), no matter what the context. Certain types of places do seem to be more predominant among the supernatural places in the Otherworld--trees, lakes, hills, churches/monasteries, the sea, etc.--while others never appear in those references, such as the music of the swords in warfare, which tend to be reserved exclusively for everyday references. Often, the Otherworld dimension itself is described as having an inherently musical or harmonic quality, no matter what the context. Dr. John Carey describes the daily living places of the sidhe inhabitants, stating that "...Otherworld beings are depicted as living within hills, beneath lakes, or the sea, or on islands in lakes, or off the coast; there are also tales of halls [of the sidhe folk] chanced upon in the night, which vanish with the coming of day...the abodes of the sidhe are lakes, rivers, stones, rocks, woods, trees, caves, underground places, bridges, hills or mountains as well as ancient earthworks and ruins; there are also tales of people and countries beneath the sea...(28) Thus, in both the supernatural Otherworld and in everyday life examples from the

Collection regarding music heard there, certain imagery tends to recur, i.e., trees, and a certain parallelism is evident, no matter what the context might be. From the heights of the music of the birds on the shining Tree of Life in the purely supernatural Otherworld, on down to the "music of the pines" in everyday life, we see a certain consistency. In the descriptions of music in the purely supernatural places, the Otherworldly nature of the place itself seems to make its music supernatural. This seems to be true whether the context is presented as overtly Christian or overtly primal.

In the myriad of examples from everyday life, music has a quality that often transforms individuals' lives. Such unusual everyday experiences are indeed rather rare, but it appears that certain places, especially, built up a reputation over time as being special with regard to supernatural music, and became enshrined in the Metrical Dindenchas place-lore. An example of this would be the waters of Assaroe, Keshcorran, and Port Lairge, co. Waterford. In medieval Christian monasteries, too, music was an integral part of everyday life, and, the locations of monasteries are portrayed in the examples from the Collection as being very musical places.

Recently in our modern, hectic world, the Gregorian chants sung by the Benedictine monks of Santo Domingo de Silos of Spain hit "number one" on the 1994 music charts, and now in 1995, sales are still going strong. We clearly seek the peace and spirituality of this music, and in the process are perhaps striving

a bit closer to the early Irish worldview regarding music. Tales abound of modern day commuters listening to Gregorian chants in their cars each day, seeking the continuity from this world to the Otherworld, known so well to the early Irish. From this Collection, it appears that the early Irish sensed a continuity, unbroken, between Otherworldly places of music and this-worldly places, making music integral to all of life.

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TIMES OF MUSIC HEARD IN THE LITERATURE OF EARLY MEDIEVAL IRELANDI. Introduction:

Do the times at which music is heard tell us anything about its source or status? Quite probably they often do. Music is often described as being heard continuously in the supernatural Otherworld; it is generally viewed as being eternally present there. In everyday, mundane life, music is heard at many different times. Generally, the time is often similar to the classification of the place in which the music is heard--for example, if music is described as being heard in a liminal place, it also often occurs at a liminal time as well. A liminal time means a time when the borders are crossed from this world into the supernatural or divine. It is difficult to ascertain exactly where the demarcation line is to be drawn between the "time reality" of our everyday life and the "timeless" realm of the Otherworld.

In the analysis of the material which follows, we will look at three primary categories of the times in which the music is described as being heard: 1) at a purely supernatural Otherworld time; 2) at a liminal time; and 3) at the various times music is heard in everyday, daily life.

Thus, in the material which follows, extracted from the Collection regarding music heard at various times, one must take into consideration how the early Irish viewed time in their society. The following material discusses the music heard at: 1) purely supernatural times, generally associated with the Otherworld; 2) at liminal times--where the "boundary" line between



mundane and divine time is crossed, and 3) the music heard as part of ordinary, everyday, mundane life. We will now look at music heard at purely supernatural times.

#### A. SUPERNATURAL TIMES OF MUSIC HEARD

In doing so, however, it is necessary to note that it is not as easy to identify supernatural times as it is to specifically locate supernatural places where music is heard. "Eternity" is one term often employed to describe a supernatural time state, usually that after death. Another way of identifying supernatural time is by using various adjectives, such as "immortal", "infinite", "perpetual", or "everlasting". Likewise, the terms "continuous" and "unceasing" are often used to describe the supernatural music heard in such a dimension. A distinct quality of timelessness is implied, as it is also an inherent quality of eternity or the Otherworld itself.

In this literature of early medieval Ireland, the particular times that music is heard are often similar to the type of "place" or "dimension" the music is classified by. For example, in a place in the purely supernatural Otherworld, such as God's Heaven or tir tairnqiri ("The Land of Promise"), the music heard is often described as continuous and unceasing, of being in a "timeless" realm of eternal harmony. At the time the Otherworld is reached, the normal "laws" of our earthly physics and time seem to be suspended, and one is in another world altogether--that of the eternal Otherworld. Such a supernatural Otherworld time dimension has its own laws and reality.

The concept of continuous music heard in a purely supernatural Otherworld occurs fairly frequently in the early medieval Irish literature. One example from the Collection illustrates this quite clearly, from Tochmarc Etaine, in which Midir of the sidhe folk tries to woo the sidhe maiden Etain with a promise of living in a wonderful land where eternal music is always present:

...Fair woman, will you go with me to a wonderful  
land where music is?...

(See Collection Ref. No. 9)

For other examples from the Collection which illustrate the concept of continuous music in an Otherworld dimension, please see Collection reference numbers: 29, 57, 69, 72, 76, 77, 110, 120, 134, 136, 142, 143, 147, 158, 159, 160, 171, 172, 173.

One way of representing the continuous nature of music, especially in overtly Christian contexts, is to relate its occurrence to the so-called canonical hours into which each twenty-four hour period was divided. These canonical hours were called the Divine Office, and were sung eight times a day--seven during the day and one at night, in which the psalms were sung and scriptures read. By doing so, the presence of Christ was believed to be recalled from its invocation in the Mass, in an effort to continually bring God's presence to the monastic environment. So by returning regularly to musical praise at these times, they effectively ensured continuity of music in Heaven and, as we see later, on earth as well.

From Fis Adomnan ("The Vision of Adamnan"), we have reference to the constant, beautiful, eternal music of Heaven in the Land of

the Saints, of the singing of the birds of Heaven and of all of the saints together in harmony in praise of God. There is also reference specifically to the time of the eight canonical hours in Heaven:

...There are three marvellous birds on the throne in the King's presence, and their task is to direct their attention always on the Creator. In praise and glorification of the Lord they sing the eight canonical hours, accompanied by the choir-singing of archangels. The music is begun by the birds and the archangels, and all the heavenly host, both saints and holy virgins, make the response to them...

(See Collection Ref. No. 134)

Likewise, the time of Vespers and the canonical hours are mentioned in the context of an island paradise in the following reference from Imram Brendain ("The Voyage of Brendan"):

...When the hour of Vespers had come, all the birds in the tree chanted, as it were with one voice, beating their wings on their sides: 'A hymn is due to thee, O God, in Zion, and a vow shall be paid to you in Jerusalem.' They kept repeating this versicle for about the space of an hour. To the man of God and his companions, the chant and the sound of their wings seemed in its sweetness like a rhymical song...

(See Collection Ref. No. 76)

In one specific reference from Immram Brain ("The Voyage of Bran") a stone is said to embody this concept of continuous music through the timeless ages as part of the Otherworld, thus:

...Then they row to the bright stone,  
from which a hundred songs arise.  
Through the long ages it sings to the host  
a melody which is not sad,  
the music swells up in choruses of hundreds,  
They do not expect decay or death."

(See Collection Ref. No. 72)

The phrase "through the long ages" implies that the music of this bright stone is always there, so to speak, it is portrayed as being eternally musical, constantly singing.

Waterfalls and wells are also described as having this quality of continuous music in the Otherworld. From a legend of the river Shannon, the Metrical Dindshenchas says that the river traces its origin to the well of Connla in tir tairngiri, ("The Land of Promise"). In the following example, the moment of the arrival of the sidhe maiden Sinann to the underwater well of Connla and its seven musical streams in tir tairngiri is thus described:

...Here thou findest the magic lore of Segais  
 with excellence, under the true spring:  
 over the well of the mighty waters  
 stands the poets' music-haunted hazel...  
 Nobly they come, with bright activity,  
 seven streams, in an untroubled gush,  
 back into the well yonder,  
 whence rises a murmur of musical lore...  
 The well fled back (clear fame through the  
 murmur of its musical lore!) before Sinann...

(See Collection Ref. No. 29)

#### Illustratory Comparative Material:

Other cultures and world folklore archives also have numerous references to music heard at supernatural times. As might be expected, such references often describe the "timelessness" of the Otherworld dimension, and it is often portrayed in the context of a supernatural Otherworld place as well. During such an encounter in the Otherworld, one's normal perception and cognition regarding the passage of time is altered, often with the mortal who returns from this supernatural dimension completely unaware of the passage

of time in earthly terms. Such a mortal might be a Christian saint who is described in the literature as having visited Heaven, or, an ordinary mortal from everyday life who is described in world folklore archives as having been to "fairyland" or some other purely supernatural Otherworld dimension. Many, if not most, of such encounters describe the nature of time in the Otherworld dimension as "timeless", with the concept of continuous, constant music often described as an integral aspect of this experience; thus, the eternal Otherworld also has eternal music. What may subjectively seem to a mortal like one hour in the Otherworld of the sidhe beings may be a year or more in our everyday time perspective.

From Welsh folklore, we have the following example from the numerous legends which describe the unusual experiences of mortal men being enchanted into "fairyland" through listening to the sweet song of a fairy bird:

...One such bird sang to a lad called Sion ap Siencyn of Pencader, Dyfed. He had been in the woods, so he thought, merely for ten minutes, but when he awoke the tree upon which the bird sang had withered. When he returned to his home an old man informed him of the words of one Caer Madog of Brechfa: 'She used to say that you were with the fairies and would not return until the last drop of sap in the tree had been dried up.'... (1)

The terminology "with the fairies" implies another place, and in this example, time in this Otherworld realm is perceived in a different manner than in our normal, everyday perception, as in our earthly terms it clearly takes longer than ten minutes for a tree to completely wither. Similarly, from the Welsh Mabinogion, the

supernatural Birds of Rhiannon appear from the Otherworld and sing to selected mortals for a period of seven years.(2) The impression from the Welsh literature is that the singing birds of Rhiannon are always present in Annwyn, the Welsh Underworld dimension; this is quite similar to the singing birds of tir tairngiri in the early medieval Irish literature.

From the nineteenth century, we have the following tale recorded about 1825 in the Vale of Neath, Wales, regarding the supernatural lapse of time in "fairyland":

...Hartland relates the true story of Rhys and Llewellyn... Rhys and Llewellyn were fellow servants to a farmer. As they went home... Rhys told his friend to stop and listen to the music. Llewellyn heard no music. But Rhys had to dance to the tune he had heard a hundred times. He begged Llewellyn to go ahead with the horses, saying that he would soon overtake him, but Llewellyn arrived home alone. The next day, he was suspected of murdering Rhys and jailed. But a farmer 'who was skilled in fairy matters' guessed the truth. Several men gathered--among them the narrator of the story--and took Llewellyn to the spot where he said his companion had vanished. Suddenly, 'Hush!' cried Llewellyn. 'I hear music, I hear sweet harps.'...[then the narrator], too, heard the sounds of many harps and saw a number of Little People dancing in a circle twenty feet or so in diameter. After him, each of the party did the same and observed the same thing. Among the dancing Little Folk was Rhys. Llewellyn caught him by his smock-frock as he passed close to them and pulled him out of the circle. At once Rhys asked, 'Where are the horses?' and asked them to let him finish the dance, which had not lasted more than five minutes. And he could never be persuaded of the time that had elapsed...(3)

Time, then, is of a different nature in the Otherworld than in our normal, three-dimensional earthly context. As the inherent nature of the Otherworld is eternal, the music is also portrayed accordingly in these references from the Collection.

Amongst the traditions of the Australian aborigines is found

the concept of the Otherworld of the shamans. It is called Alcheringa, believed to be the spiritual home of the ancestors. This particular shamanic tradition places great emphasis on the importance of dreams, and the instructions obtained in them from the ancestors to the shaman. Mircea Eliade points out that in many world shamanic traditions, it is often in dreams and/or the Otherworld state that "historical time is abolished and the mythical time regained." (4) The ascent to this Otherworld dimension is made by special songs and chants, and by way of the rainbow, mythically imagined as a huge snake, on whose back the master climbs as on a rope. Thus, in the supernatural Otherworld state, the shaman re-establishes the paradisaical situation lost at the dawn of time, i.e., the "Fall of Man". In this Otherworld dimension, "the material limitations and physical restrictions of ordinary people do not exist. The novice returns to his primordial state by contacting the spirits of the ancestors. He thus gets a taste of the sacred nature of being, of a timeless age..."(5)

The Corroboree poets of the Australian Unambal also emphasize receiving their special songs and chants from the Otherworld, where time is "timeless" by normal, everyday standards. The retrieval of special songs and chants, obtainable only in the Otherworld, is a hallmark of Australian shamanism. Dr. Holger Kalweit, in his research on their techniques, states that the poet "travel to the Beyond where he can collect songs and chants, which he teaches to the members of his tribe." (6) That the acquisition of special "songs of power" and certain chants can come only from the

supernatural Otherworld is emphasized in shamanic traditions worldwide, implying that there is a musical element to the Otherworld; the continuous music there can apparently be "accessed" at any time by a trained shaman--the Otherworld thus appearing to be continuously musical or harmonic in some manner. Here, in the Australian tradition, the Otherworld is described specifically in relation to time as well--the Dreamtime.

The motif of melodious music as part of Heaven or Paradise is well-known in world literature. Given the story of the Fall of Man in Genesis, and the expulsion from the Garden of Eden, mankind must now attempt, with Christ's help from the Christian viewpoint, to return to the homeland of God's Heaven. Brian Murdoch in his analysis of Saltair na Rann explains the mention in Irish literature, and other world literature, of the theme of the perpetual summer of Paradise and its melodious music, stating that it is "the stress on summer as the ideal time in Irish, English, and other northern vernaculars." (7) Summertime in Paradise, frequently portrayed with the eternal, melodious, sweet singing of birds, is a rather common motif in world literature descriptions of Paradise, with Murdoch commenting that "the notion of the singing birds, so striking a motif here, is interesting, and seems to be particularly Irish in its intensity, and in the delight taken in it, though perhaps not in intrinsic originality". (8) Heaven or Paradise is constantly "singing" with beautiful music and harmony, and especially so in the early medieval Irish literature.

From the Bible, Revelation 4:8 describes the continuous



singing of God's Heaven, as the four eternal living creatures never stop singing "Holy, Holy, Holy", etc., as previously mentioned in the "Performers" chapter. Similarly, the seven Heavens of Islam are portrayed in the Qur'an as having beautiful, continuous music, especially the rank of the highest angelic choirs, which sing around the throne of God, singing praise and glory to their Lord. (sura 40:7) Judaism, too, has a similar concept in the continuous singing of the angelic orders, also reflecting a belief that the Otherworld has a timeless quality in conjunction with the continuous singing in praise of Yahweh.

In the writings of classical philosophers, the Otherworld was often described as inherently musical or harmonic, with the Golden Age, or Elysium, often portrayed as including the music of the celestial spheres. Its eternal harmony was seen as part and parcel of the very fabric of creation itself, an image of the Logos, the unfolding of cosmic Time throughout the universe. The Golden Age is a symbol of the timeless, eternal realm--one of perfect harmony. The return to Arcadia, or Eden--the original Garden of Paradise and its harmony of God--is often portrayed in many religious traditions as humanity's overall task and goal, to be reunited with God and the universe. According to the ancients, we are waiting for this moment, when the "flaw" of the Pythagorean Comma can be corrected and we reunite with God, again hearing the full harmony of the universe. [Meanwhile, as Samuel Beckett put it, we are "waiting for Godot"....]

#### B. LIMINAL TIMES OF MUSIC HEARD

Liminal times, like liminal places, are those times in which the normal boundaries or borders between our usual everyday reckoning of time and Otherworld time are crossed. "Liminal" is a term derived from the Latin limen meaning "threshold". (9) At such a time, and often in conjunction with a certain liminal place as well, an interplay of earthly time and Otherworld time occurs, with music often described as being heard at these times in the literature of early medieval Ireland. Examples of liminal times might be dawn, dusk, twilight, at birth, at death, the exact moment of sunset, or at one of the four festival points in the ancient Irish year. Regarding this study of music references from the Collection, such liminal times are those unique times when it would be more conducive for one to possibly have an opportunity to hear supernatural music, or, to encounter supernatural musicians in some manner.

More specifically, the exact liminal time or moment would be the time(s) between the festivals of the year, for example--i.e., the twilight time of Samain eve, for example, when a thin "crack" in Otherworld time reality would have the opportunity to break through into our earthly, everyday world and be witnessed and/or experienced by mortals. When such encounters are described in folklore, the dilemma raised by extraordinary encounters with nonhuman entities is best summed up in the ancient belief that the sidhe can only be seen "Between one eye blink and the next." (10)

Liminal times--daily, seasonally, yearly, or in the human lifespan--are part of everyday life. But, like liminal places,

their boundary nature can signify a crossing-over or transcendence, so the music heard at such times can easily raise expectations of supernatural status. Music performed at these times might be especially sacred or solemn.

Initially, however, we must first take a look at how the ancient Irish viewed time and divided their annual year. There has survived in Ireland, according to Dr. Kevin Danaher, "from the remote into the recent past, and in many instances into the living present, a body of custom, usage and belief, pertaining to the observance of certain times, dates, and festivals, which is so extensive and so cohesive as to constitute a folk calendar." (11) Such a calendar divided the year into four important festival days: Imbolc, February 1, Bealtaine, May 1, Lughnasadh, August 1, and Samhain, November 1.

The term Imbolc occurs only in the earliest literature of Ireland and as Dr. Daithi O'hOgain states, "its meaning may be either 'parturition' or 'lactation'. Tradition shows clearly that this feast of Brighid was concerned with the birth of young animals and that it was originally under the tutelage of the goddess Brighid. Until recently, it was customary to invoke the protection of her namesake saint on farm animals at this time..." (12) Fairs were held. Danaher adds that "On the Eve of the festival...the good Saint Brighid, patroness of farm work and cattle, and protector of the house from fire and calamity, was said to be abroad, and steps were taken to bid her welcome and obtain her protection." (13) In later times, St. Brighid was associated with fire and purification

rites.

The second of these festival times, Bealtaine, May 1, marked the beginning of the summer season. Cattle were put to pasture, the main dairy season began, the cattle were blessed with prayers for good productivity, and songs were sung. Bealtaine originally meant "bright fire", according to O'hOgain, and tradition was that often a great fire was lit by various communities, often on a hilltop, and "no doubt anciently derived from a desire to encourage the sun". (14) The merry month of May also had a association with happiness and love, and as Dr. Proinsias Mac Cana put it, "Indeed, in many societies Spring, and especially the month of May, was the season of love and spontaneous unions, but was nonetheless regarded as an unfavorable time for conventional marriages." (15)

The unseen supernatural world was also viewed by the early Irish as being especially active on May Eve and during the Bealtaine season. The sidhe folk of the hills and mounds were at their own revels during this time, and it was believed that humans had to exercise special caution not to disturb or offend them. By watchfulness, prayers, and songs, great care was taken to safeguard against the possible machinations of the sidhe folk, and the evil magic of certain humans. Music and joyful fairs were held around this time, and the hopeful prosperity of the year celebrated.

Lughnasadh, August 1, was considered to be the beginning of the harvest season. New corn, potatoes, and fruit were brought into the household, as were some of the leftovers from the storage from last year's harvest. Many fairs were held at Lughnasadh,

later called Lammas time, and included activities of music, dancing, games, and storytelling. Maire MacNeill, in The Festival of Lughsasa, states that the two great Irish assemblies were the fairs (Old Ir. "oenach") held at Tailten and Carmain. "Oenach Tailten was held at Teltown in County Meath...oenach Carmain was associated with the kingship of Leinster but its site is not known..." (16) Some of these traditions survived down to the present century, with the older meanings nearly gone, but the time is observed as the Sunday nearest August 1, called the Sunday of Crom Dubh, also called Garland Sunday, or Lammas Sunday. On this day, many times families would climb hilltops for prayers and the gathering of bilberries after Mass. In the Collection of music references from this early medieval Irish literature, it is clear that the fairs of Lughnasadh, especially those of Tailten and Carmun, were attended by many different types of musicians, jesters, acrobats, and the like, to celebrate the harvest.

Samhain, November 1, meant the time near the end of summer, and the beginning of the winter season. It was considered to be a New Year time, when the veil between this world and the Otherworld was particularly thin; i.e., a particularly liminal time. Being the beginning of the dark winter season, it was associated with the dead and the Otherworld, perhaps the most active time of the year for unusual supernatural events to occur. The dead ancestors were of special importance at this time, and it was believed that one could more likely communicate with them at this time of year than any other. This was also the date of the annual festival of Tara,

the ancient centre of Irish kingship, at which time all of the high kings of each province in Ireland would gather. Danaher states that on Samhain eve, "so active were the otherworld beings, that, however, much frightened, nobody was really surprised at any apparition or supernatural manifestation...The souls of the dead members of the household returned to the old homestead and were met with tokens of welcome--the open doors, the fire burning on the hearth, and the table set for meal. Special prayers for the repose of the souls of the dead were added to those for protection against danger and evil." (17) Fairs at Tara and Tlachta were held on Samhain, and often involved much singing and playing of musical instruments. Later, Samhain was called All Saint's Day, a Christianization of this earlier festival, but still including the primary emphasis on the dead.

These four seasonal points of the year were the major early Irish division of time in their society. As to the antiquity of these seasonal festival times, evidence from Irish historical and literary sources indicates that they also had a relationship to one another--i.e. liminal times--and the festivals themselves were not viewed as totally separate and distinct holiday periods, but as one time of the year flowing into another, all as part of one yearly cycle.

The months of the year were also named for these festivals up to our more modern times. For example, in the Irish language May is *Mi na Bealtaine*, August, *Mi na Lunasa*, November, *Mi na Samhna*, and February was popularly called *Mi na Feile Bhride*. Danaher points out that "the naming of the months from the seasons or the

season days clearly points to the conclusion that the season and not the month was the primary subdivision of the year, and makes it probable that reckoning in months was a later introduction, possibly, like the celebration of Easter and the seven-day week, an innovation associated with early Christianity." (18) A number of the music references from this Collection do make reference to a specific season of the year, often related to one of the major four festivals, and/or a month.

Regarding the seven-day week, Daibhi O'Croinin examines this issue in Eriu and concludes that ... "the reckoning of time in pre-Christian Irish society was of one-, three-, five-, ten-, or fifteen-day periods; the seven-day week was entirely unknown." (9) D.A. Binchy discusses similar periods of the reckoning of time in early Irish society regarding the time periods allowed for various periods of stay on legal proceedings. (20) However, by the time of our earliest records of the Old Irish period, the seven-day week and the names for each day were commonplace, so, some of the music references in this Collection do reflect these time descriptions, most generally those in the more overtly Christian contexts.

One of the most common liminal times when music is heard in this literature is that of Samhain, November 1. In one instance at Samhain time, king Ailill and the poet Ferchess went to pasture their horses and encounter supernatural sidhe music:

...Then Ailill went one Samhain to pasture his horses on Ane Cliach...The hill was stript bare that night and no one knew who stript it. This happened to him twice in that wise. It was a marvel to him...Ferchess came to speak with him, (and) on Samhain they both go to the hill. Ailill waits on the hill. Ferchess was

outside it. Then sleep fell on Ailill listening to the grazing of the cattle. They [i.e., those who had been 'mysteriously' stripping the hill at night] had come out of the fairy mound, followed by Eogabul son of Durgabul, the king of the mound, and Eogabul's daughter Ane, was before him, with a brazen timpan in her hand which she was playing for him...

(See Collection Ref. No. 55)

A similar situation occurs at Samhain time when king Ailill and Ferchess again go to a meadow with their horses, wondering who keeps stripping the grass bare. They decide to remain there to see, as follows:

...Ailill took a meadow here in his territory for his horses...The slender sidhe ["elves" or "fairies"] did not like the intrusion of their territory: they used to destroy the grass every Samhain...`They are trampling the grass and eating our substance in our despite, singing lovely sidhe music which would make the race of Adam sleep'... [said Ailill]...

(See Collection Ref. No. 98)

Probably the most notorious event at Samhain every year was the annual destruction of Tara, the centre of kingship, by a blast of fire from the sidhe musician Aillen of the Tuatha de Danann:

...For it was Aillen mac Midhna of the Tuatha de Danann that out of sidhe Finnachaidh to the northward used to come to Tara: the manner of his coming being with a musical timpan in his hand, which whenever any heard he would at once sleep. Then, all being lulled thus, out of his mouth Aillen would emit a blast of fire. It was on the solemn Samhain-day he came in every year, played his timpan, and to the fairy music (ceol side) that he made all hands would fall asleep. With his breath he used to blow up the flame and so, during a three-and twenty years' spell, yearly burnt up Tara with all her gear...

(See Collection Ref. No. 91)

Plagued by such terrorism on Tara every year at Samhain, the high king of Ireland was understandably concerned and offered a



reward to any man in all of Ireland who could stop this event. All remained silent, as they knew that at the magical sidhe strains of Aillen's timpan they were helpless and would fall asleep, and thus Tara would be burnt:

...Then with a smooth and polished drinking horn that was in his hand the king of Ireland stood up and said: 'if, men of Ireland, I might find with you one that until the point of rising day upon the morrow, should preserve Tara that she be not burnt by Aillen mac Midhna, his rightful heritage, (were the same much or were it little) I would bestow on him.' To this the men of Erin listened mute and silent however, for they knew that at the plaintive fairy strain (ceol sirrechtach side) and at the subtle sweet-voiced notes produced by the wondrous elfin (sidhe) man that yearly used to burn Tara...

(See Collection Ref. No. 92)

Finally, it took the resolve of Finn mac Cumail to solve the problem--by putting the point of his sword on his forehead to stay awake during Aillen's beguiling music, and thus save Tara from the annual Samhain destruction by Aillen's deadly melodies, as follows:

...He [Finn] was not long before he heard a plaintive strain, (ceol sirrechtach) and to his forehead he held the flat of the spear-head with its dire energy. Aillen began and played his timpan; he had lulled everyone else to sleep, and then to consume Tara emitted from his mouth his blast of fire. But to this Finn opposed...

(See Collection Ref. No. 93)

Clearly, the liminal time of Samhain in early Ireland was a time in which supernatural music could possibly intervene into everyday life, and in this case, with Aillen of the Tuatha de Danann, the bewitching music of the Otherworld is featured.

Samhain's music is described in a late ninth-century poem by the hermit poet Marban as he describes the atmosphere around his

hut:

...Bees, chafers, (restricted humming, tenuous buzz);  
barnacle geese, brent geese, shortly before Samhain  
(music of a dark wild one)...

(See Collection Ref. No. 100)

As Samhain was considered to be the beginning of the winter season, it is often thought of as "dark", or even dangerous or menacing at times, in this poetry. In sharp contrast, the season of Bealtaine signified the beginning of summer, and the descriptions of the music at this time reflect a much more joyful tone:

...Woodland music plays; melody provides perfect peace;  
dust is blown from dwelling-place...swallows dart aloft;  
vigour of music surrounds the hill (?); soft rich fruit  
flourishes...the hardy cuckoo sings; the trout leaps...

(See Collection Ref. No. 123)

Lughnasadh (August 1) in particular is mentioned more often as pertains to music in this Collection, with emphasis being on the great fairs of Tailten and Carmun. At these often huge, joyful, loud and colorful fairs, young people would dance, while the older folk would tell stories or play various games and everyone would have feasts, and it would seem, enjoy music. As this time of year was the beginning of the harvest, in ancient times the Fianna warriors would go hunting at this time, signalled to them by the melodious singing of birds. From Accalam na Senorach ("The Colloquy of the Ancient Men"), St. Patrick is portrayed as asking the last remaining legendary old Fianna warriors about the Lughnasadh time:

...[said Cailte of the Fianna to Patrick:]...on the first day of the trogan month which is called Lughnasadh, we, to the number of the Fianna's three battalions, practised to repair thither and there to have our fill of hunting until such time as from the tree tops the cuckoos would call in Ireland. More melodious than all music whatsoever it was to give ear to the voices of the birds...[after which, the bands of Fianna warriors would go to Ireland].

(See Collection Ref. No. 95)

The great fairs of Carmun and Tailten are also mentioned in relation to the time of Lughnasadh. At the fair of Carmun, pipers, fiddlers, horn-players, bone-players, trumpeters, jesters, poets, and timpanists are described:

...Pipes, fiddles, gleemen,  
bones-players and bag-pipers,  
a crowd hideous, noisy, profane,  
shriekers and shouters...

...Tales of death and slaughter  
strains of music...

(See Collection Ref. No. 12)

...These are the Fair's great privileges:  
trumpets, fiddles, hollow-throated horns,  
pipers, timpanists unwearied,  
poets and meek musicians...

(See Collection Ref. No. 13)

At the Tailten fair at Lughnasadh, various games and the "music" of the chariots is mentioned:

...White sided Taltiu uttered  
in her land a true prophecy,  
that so long as every prince should accept her,  
Erin should not be without perfect song.

A fair with gold, with silver,  
with games, with music of chariots,  
with adornment of body and soul  
by means of knowledge and eloquence...

(See Collection Ref. No. 30)

Often, the descriptions of the important rites of passage of the birth or death of a saint involve supernatural music in some manner. From Betha Colmain ("The Life of Colman") we have the following description of supernatural music around a church at his birth, a liminal time:

...On the night, however, when Colman son of Luachain was born...That night bishop Etchen stayed in Tech Lomain, and when matins had come and the clerics rose up for it...they heard many marvellous kinds of music around the church on every side; and nothing more marvellous and more melodious had ever been heard by them before--viz., angels of Heaven making welcome to Colman son of Luachain, as on the night of the birth of Christ angels made many marvellous kinds of music around Bethlehem on every side...

(See Collection Ref. No. 138)

The moment of the death of a saint--here, St. Patrick--is described as being associated with the sacred music of Heaven after his departure from earthly life. From the "Tripartite Life of Patrick", referring to the time immediately after his death and subsequent burial, the following is described:

...And for the space of twelve nights, to wit, the time during which the elders of Ireland were watching him with hymns and psalms and canticles, there was no night in Mag Inis, but an angelic radiance therein... On the first night the angels of the Lord of the elements were watching Patrick's body with spiritual songs. The odour of divine grace which came from the holy body, and the music of the angels, brought sleep and joy to the elders of the men of Ireland who were watching the body in the nights afterwards...

(See Collection Ref. No. 171)

Also, at the moment of the death of St. Columba, we have a description from the Amra of Columcille of his soul ascending to Heaven accompanied by the music of both heaven and earth:

...He went with music to heaven-land after his cross.  
 It is how he went to the land of heaven after his  
 suffering here, with the music of the family of  
 heaven and of earth: or, in the chief-choir of the  
 angels of heaven...

(See Collection Ref. No. 143)

At such a liminal time as the moment of death, the music of the Otherworld, in this case the Christian Heaven, has a better opportunity of intervening in earthly affairs. Of course, with saints, this is even more likely to happen at such a time than with mere ordinary mortals.

#### Illustratory Comparative Material:

Reports of hearing supernatural music at liminal times such as twilight, dusk, or dawn are common throughout world folklore archives. One seventy-year-old informant stated in 1911 that the area around the ancient site of the Irish High kings-Tara--was still an active sidhe site for hearing supernatural music at certain times, notably at "the twilight hour":

...at the twilight hour, wondrous music still sounds over its slopes, and at night long, weird processions of silent spirits march around its grass-grown raths and forts...'As sure as you are sitting down I heard the pipes there in that wood (pointing to a wood on the northwest slope of the Hill of Tara, and west of the banquet hall)...I often heard it in the wood of Tara. Whenever the good people play, you hear their music all through the field as plain as can be; and it is the grandest kind of music. It may last half the night, but once day comes, it ends.'...(21)

Likewise from Welsh folklore, tales of the Tylwyth Teg and their music reveal a similar belief about the importance of the liminal time element--here, around twilight time and after:

...`There were many of the Tylwyth Teg on the Llwydiarth Mountain above here, and around the Llwydiarth Lake where they used to dance... they appeared only after dark...many others...have seen the Tylwyth Teg in these mountains, and have heard their music and song...(22)

The Breton corrigans also favored the twilight hour and were often reported to be seen and heard in earlier times singing and playing their music at Carnac in the evening hours. The lutins and the corrigans "only show themselves at night, or in the twilight. No one knows where they pass the day-time." (23)

From Islam, the story of Muhammed's famous night-time journey to Jerusalem, where it is stated in the Qur'an that he went through all of the Heavens, and heard the supernatural singing of the angelic hierarchies. The liminal time of the twilight hour and the night-time hours being the specific time for his celestial journey is made reference to in the Qur'an, as is the special blessedness of Jerusalem. (24)

The very early morning hours are also believed to be liminal times when supernatural music may be heard, and, the exact moment of dawn is often portrayed as when the sidhe disappear. The following example comes from the oral Welsh folklore archives of early this century, occurs in the context of the informant telling of a special green place, a hollow near the water, and was then asked as to when the fairies could be seen and their music heard:

...And I don't think anyone saw the fairies during the daylight. I believe that if we had risen early enough in the morning, then we would have seen them...(25)

This implies that the informant seems to believe that the time from twilight to dawn is most favorable for seeing the fairies, as

once dawn comes, with its first ray of daylight, the fairies tend to disappear. The informant seems to feel that one's opportunity to see and hear the music of the fairies during the daytime hours is practically "nil", so to speak.

The time of death as a liminal time regarding music occurs in the saints' lives in world literature, as well as in reports down to our own day in the twentieth century. One of the best known examples in Musicology is the famous story of the death of the great composer Gustav Mahler:

...Gustav Mahler on his deathbed, when he appeared to be sinking into a final state of shallow breathing, suddenly and with intense, almost superhuman energy, as the legend goes, sat up with eyes wide open and pointed, wildly excited, to a place in the distance. He said with a sense of wonder, "Mozart!" (26)

At the time of his impending death, it would appear that he perhaps had a vision of Mozart, and/or also heard his music. At either rate, it has been claimed that something supernatural involving music did take place at that time, and this story has become legendary in the annals of Musicology.

### C. TIMES OF MUSIC HEARD IN EVERYDAY, MUNDANE LIFE

Everyday life in early Ireland, as portrayed in this literature, was lively and varied, with many activities that involved the use and appreciation of music. For example, as stated earlier, there were work songs, funeral keens, religious songs, weaving songs, etc. all incorporating music into everyday life in a much more direct manner than we do now. There was little tendency then to compartmentalize music; instead, it was seen as an

integral part of mundane, daily activities. Also, at given points in the month or week, music might be played more often than others. Even the concept of "continuous music" is prevalent in everyday life as well, with the constant "music" of the hermit monk's woodland or the wandering poet's "music" of the rivers described in the references from this Collection.

From Accalam na Senorach, we have the following late twelfth-century poem which tells of a description of three Fianna warriors listening to "wolf-music" in winter time, as recalled by the aged Cailte, a mythological last survivor of the Fianna:

...The stag of Slievecarran of the assemblies  
does not lay his side to the ground; the stag  
of the head of cold Aughty listens likewise  
to wolf-music.

I, Cailte, and brown-haired Diarmait, and  
keen light Oscar, used to listen to  
wolf-music at the end of a very cold night...

(See Collection Ref. No. 122)

In a poem attributed to Suibne Geilt, while he wanders in exile as a bird, he comments on the tuneful cry of the river Garb as part of his everyday life experience:

...I hear melodious music in the Garb at the  
time of its winter splendor; I sleep to the  
sound of great revelry on a very cold icy night...

(See Collection Ref. No. 111)

In contrast, the following excerpt is from a tenth-century Old Irish poem from "Uath Beinne Etair", in which the hermit comments on a very bitter cold winter night and the absence of any music heard:



...The fishes of Innis Fail are a-roaming  
 There is no marge nor well of waves,  
 In the lands there is no land,  
 Not a bell is heard, no crane talks...

(See Collection Ref. No. 127)

Rivers are often described as having a type of "continuous" music as part of everyday monastic appreciation of God's creation, as do mountains, etc. The following reference comes from a twelfth-century poem entitled "Suibne in the Woods", in which the exiled Suibne, cursed by St. Ronan Finn and now disguised as a bird, comments on his surroundings in everyday life during the time of his exile:

...I like not the noise of trumpets  
 which I hear in the morning; badgers  
 calling in badger-haunted mountain-peaks  
 are more musical to me.

I like not the horn-blowing  
 which I tensely hear;  
 when a stag with forty antlers  
 bells I find it more musical...

Beside the firm Taidiu (Water-course) in  
 the south my lasting resting-place will be;  
 at the monastery of angelic Mo Ling I shall  
 fall by the instrumentality of an antler-peak.

Ronan Finn's curse has brought me into  
 your company, antlered one, belling one,  
 you of the musical cry...

From the Knockmealdown mountains (it is  
 no easy expedition) I come to the river  
 in pleasant Gaille. From the Gaille river  
 (though it is a long journey) I make my  
 way east to music-haunted Slieve Brey...

(See Collection Ref. Nos. 117-9)

The day time hours are mentioned in many of the hermit poems, as illustrated by this reference from the Leabhar Breac manuscript:

...Ah, blackbird, it is well for you,  
 Wherever in the thicket be your nest,  
 Hermit that sounds no bell,  
 Sweet, soft, fairylike is your note...

(See Collection Ref. No. 130)

Similarly, from the late-ninth century Old Irish poem  
 entitled "King and Hermit":

...Beautiful are the pines which  
 make music for me, unhired;  
 through Christ, I am no worse off  
 at any time than you...(Ref. No. 103)

...A hedge of trees overlooks me; a blackbird's  
 lay sings to me (an announcement which I shall  
 not conceal); above my lined book the birds'  
 chanting sings to me.

A clear-voiced cuckoo sings to me (goodly  
 utterance) in a grey cloak from bush  
 fortresses. The Lord is indeed good to me:  
 well do I write beneath a forest of woodland.  
 (See Collection Ref. No. 104)

The "music" of birds is described as being continually heard  
 at night, as in this example from a twelfth-century poem:

...the lively linnet does not sleep above the tops of  
 the fair tangled trees; loud music prevails there;  
 no thrush sleeps...

Tonight the curlew does not sleep; high above a storm's  
 ragings the sound of its clear cry is musical; it  
 sleeps not between streams...

(See Collection Ref. No. 126)

The time period of "forty days and forty nights" comes up in  
 the saints's lives, in particular the Tripartite Life of St.  
Patrick. In the following example St. Patrick banishes evil black  
 birds after a period of forty days and forty nights on the mountain  
 of Cruachan Aigle, much like Moses in the Old Testament:

...Now at the end of those forty days and forty nights the mountain was filled with black birds, so that he knew not Heaven nor earth. He sang maledictive psalms at them. They left him not because of this. Then his anger grew against them. He strikes his bell at them, so that the men of Ireland heard its voice, and he flung it at them, so that its gap broke out of it, and that bell is 'Brigit's Gapling'. Then Patrick weeps... No demon came to the land of Erin after that till the end of seven years and seven months and seven days and seven nights. Then the angel went to console Patrick, and cleansed the chasuble, and brought white birds around the Cruachan, and they used to sing sweet melodies for him...

(See Collection Ref. No. 165)

In overtly Christian contexts especially, some times set aside as sacred might be occasions for more than natural music, such as the Mass or during the canonical hours. One incident from Betha Colmain ("The Life of Colman") refers to the time of Mass:

...and he [a priest] had no bell with him to sound the summons for hearing his Mass, so that then the Finnfaidech [sweet-sounding bell] of Colman mac Luachan was sent down to him from Heaven, and the mark of its rim is still there in the stone. So the bell was struck...

(See Collection Ref. No. 141)

From Betha Decclain ("The Life of St. Declan"), we have the following reference to a bell being provided by God at the moment of the beginning of Mass:

...Declan was beginning Mass one day in a church which lay in his road, when there was sent him from Heaven a little black bell...Declan greatly rejoiced thereat and gave thanks and glory of Christ...

(See Collection Ref. No. 152)

The time of Doomsday itself, and the music of the bell of St. Patrick, is described in the following reference from Betha Coluimb Cille. Here, St. Columcille explains to his fellow cleric Baithin about how St. Patrick himself will come for the men and women of

Ireland on the Day of Doom, and summon them with his bell at that time:

...`Tell me now,' said Baithin, `how shall it fare with Patrick in the day of Doom for sake of the men of Erin?' `I will tell a portion of it,' said Coluimb Cille, `as far as God shall permit me. Patrick will come to Cluain mac Nois to meet the men of Erin. Then he will cause a bell to be rung in Cruachan Aigle, to wit, the Bernan of Patrick which he himself formerly broke upon the demons banishing them from the Cruach. And the men and women of Erin shall come at the voice of that bell...

(See Collection Ref. No. 148)

The time of the Ordination of a priest is portrayed as a special time in the everyday Christian life of the early Irish saints, when supernatural music might intervene. Such a portrayal is evident at this description of the Ordination of St. Patrick:

...Then, too, was the name `Patricius' given unto him, a name of power as the Romans think, to wit, one who looseth hostages. He, then, loosed the hostageship and slavery of the Gael to the Devil. And when the orders were a-reading out, the three choirs mutually responded, namely, the choir of the household of Heaven, and the choir of the Romans, and the choir of the children from the wood of Fochlad...

(See Collection Ref. No. 164)

Clearly, these choirs--a mix of earthly and supernatural--are here portrayed as singing simultaneously at the time of St. Patrick's ordination, designating this time as a special one in everyday Christian life.

The time of the canonical hours in the monasteries were obviously musical times in monastic life, with the chanting of the psalms and bells sounded, etc. The following reference from the Collection comes from Betha Colmain ("The Life of Colman"), describing St. Colman as a young boy, and making reference to the

canonical hours specifically:

...the boy was brought up piously and humbly; and wherever he used to be they would hear psalms and choral song, and the sound of a bell at every canonical hour, and the singing of Mass every Sunday, so that people would come to ask, 'what was the assembly that came here last night?'...

(See Collection Ref. No. 139)

Similarly, from Betha Mochuda ("The Life of St. Mochuda")

St. Mochuda as a young boy hears the singing of the clerics at the time of the canonical hours and becomes so inspired that he decided to enter the priesthood. One day, Mochuda's family is very worried at the young boy's long absence, and the king then questions him as to why he has been gone so long:

...Mochuda replied, "Sir, this is why I have stayed away-- through attraction of the holy chant of the bishop and clergy; I have never heard anything so beautiful as this; the clerics sang as they went along the whole way before me; they sang until they arrived at their house, and thenceforth they sang till they went to sleep. The bishop however remained by himself far into the night praying by himself when the others had retired. And I wish, O king, that I might learn their psalms and ritual...

(See Collection Ref. No. 161)

The following reference also makes reference to the canonical hours. Here, a man named Enne would not give St. Columcille an island for his missionary work, so, he cursed him, then telling the man of all of the advantages he could of had by donating the island. St. Columcille says:

...and besides there would be a company of the birds of Paradise singing there every day...and the bells would ring of themselves at Mass and office time...

(See Collection Ref. No. 151)

Illustratory Comparative Material:

In much of world literature, from hagiography to folklore, music is explained as being heard in everyday life experience at specific time(s), often connotating a special religious day, month, year, or festival.

From the Bible, and the Old Testament in particular, we have the use of music designated by divine command from Yahweh to be used at certain times as part of everyday religious festivities:

...The trumpets shall be to you a perpetual statue throughout your generations...On the day of gladness, on your feast days and at the beginnings of your months you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and peace offerings, so that they may be to you a remembrance before your God...[Num. 10:8, 10]

As part of everyday life, in the Temple at Jerusalem the Levites sang during the offering of the Paschal sacrifice to the accompaniment of flutes, which were sometimes played by non-Levites. Regarding a general description of everyday use of music in Judaic festivals, the following tells of the Talmudic description of the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles:

...At the liturgical celebration on the seven mornings of the feast those who participated chanted the Hosanna from Psalm 118:25 while they circled around the altar.... bending toward it the palm branches which they were holding in their hands. So too, as they retired from the altar at the sound of the trumpet, they cried out repeatedly: 'Beauty be yours, O altar!' At eventide the most distinguished of the people assembled together. Pious men danced with torches in their hands before the people, singing songs and hymns, while the Levites, arranged upon the fifteen steps (corresponding to the fifteen gradual psalms) which led from the Court of the Men to the Court of the Women, accompanied them with harps, citharas, and numerous other instruments.

Two priests with trumpets stood at the upper gate between the Court of Men and the Court of Women. At the first cockcrow they blew the trumpets and continued to do so until they reached the east exit...(27)

Clearly, music and singing were an integral part of such festivals, and the great awareness of time in the Judaic tradition is evident from this example.

But one special festival in particular--The Year of Jubilee--stands out regarding the issue of time and music. We have the description in Leviticus 25:8, where Yahweh speaks to Moses on Mt. Sinai, giving instructions as to how a special ram's horn, the yobel, is to be used to summon the people and mark the time of the very special Year of Jubilee (shanat ha yobel):

...You will count seven weeks of years--seven times seven years, that is to say a period of seven weeks of years, forty-nine years. And on the tenth day of the seventh month you will sound the trumpet; on the Day of Expiation you will sound the trumpet throughout the land. You will declare this fiftieth year to be sacred and proclaim the liberation of all the country's inhabitants...[Lev. 25:8]

In the Hebrew, the horn in question, the yobel, is a specific type of ram's horn, with the more well-known shofar a more generic Hebrew word for ram's horn. Music of trumpets were of course sounded during the Feast of Trumpets, the beginning of the seventh month. The music of the yobel is to be blown on The Year of Jubilee, which is a very special occasion, as it comes much less often, making it especially unique among the Old Testament Israelite festivals, as the title of the festival itself which can

be translated literally as "the year which is announced by the blasts of the yobel."

Throughout the life of the Israelites in the Old Testament, there are numerous examples of rejoicing, playing musical instruments, and singing praises to Yahweh as part of everyday life experience. Likewise, synagogues today carry on these and other musical traditions as part of religious practice.

From Islamic sources, the marking of time in the annual year often coincides with certain festivals that involve singing and/or chanting. The well-known daily prayers and chants to Allah by Muslims worldwide, while facing Mecca, is an example of music in the everyday life of Muslims. The specific practices of Islam comprise the confession of faith (al-tashahhud), the prayer ritual, legal almsiving, the annual fast, and pilgrimage to Mecca. "There are several occasions for fasting (saum) in Islam; the most exacting fast is that of Ramadan." (28) This major festival is well-known worldwide, and the twenty-seventh night of Ramadan is especially sacred, a night when it is believed that "the gates of Heaven are open, and the possibility exists of altering human destinies", as it is thought of as the time of God's revelation to Muhammad. During this time, as might be expected, much popular devotion and enthusiastic veneration of Muhammad occurs, with singing and chanting playing a part in the overall festivities.

Early Christian liturgy emphasized singing, with one musicologist stating:

... "the Apostolic Age bears witness to the joyful character of early Christianity,



particularly as it was expressed in singing. In Eph. 5:19 Paul calls upon Christians to 'address one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord in your heart.' Col. 3:16 also refers to singing 'psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God.' These words clearly express the Apostle's conviction that singing is a fitting way to honor God. There is at the same time, however, a certain reservation in what Paul says. In both passages he adds what seems to be a warning against a purely aesthetic pleasure in singing...(29)

At the time of Christian worship, rejoicing and singing hymns and psalms with a joyful heart was emphasized. At the vigils and feasts of the martyrs, musical instruments were sometimes employed, but there was much debate about this among the Church Fathers, as the early church was struggling hard against the earlier pagan traditions of music and dancing. St. Augustine's second discourse on Psalm 32:33 illustrates this concept, where he asks his listeners, "Has not the institution of those vigils in Christ's name caused the citharas to be banished from this place?" (30) One of the pseudo-Justinian tracts entitled "Oratio ad Graecos", written about 400 A.D., puts the following words into the mouth of God in a discourse about the use of instruments during the time of the popular feasts of the martyrs: "I hate your feasts. The gluttony which takes place at them is unseemly, as are the lustful actions provoked by enticing flutes." (31) Clearly, monophonic singing was preferred by the early Church.

In ancient China, music was performed at very specific times, based on their belief system of the twelve celestial Tones in the universe. The early Chinese believed that the twelve Tones did

express themselves individually to a greater degree according to a month of the year, the time of day, and so forth. In their view, a particular Tone sounded more prominently in a particular month, and during a particular hour of the day. Therefore, the performing of music was coordinated with these special times, often centering around religious festivities. The annual cycle of the year had its own divisions of time:

...each of the twelve celestial Tones corresponded with an astrological month of the year, during which the Tone was believed to be more prominently sounded throughout the earth. The first six months of the year expressed the six yang Tones; the second six months from mid-summer to winter solstice expressed the yin Tones. The musician performed his music in a key which was associated with the current zodiacal month. The twelve notes, or lui, of the Chinese musical system each corresponded to one of the months. The note of each month was, in audible sound, the earthly reflection or 'undertone' of the month's celestial Tone. Therefore each month of the year possessed its own tonic and dominant lui, with which all ceremonial music should be performed at that time...(32)

In antiquity, music at the time of the offering of incense to the gods was prevalent. The presence of flutists at the time of the ritual of incense offerings in Rome is confirmed by textual evidence, as Suetonius, for example, speaks of the flutist employed by the Emperor Tiberius at his incense sacrifice. The poet Propertius looked upon flute music as itself a libation for the gods. (33) Likewise, in Greece and other areas of the ancient world, singing and the playing of musical instruments accompanied celebrations and rites to Aphrodite and other gods and goddesses.

### CONCLUSION

The times when music is heard in the literature of early

medieval Ireland vary from the purely supernatural to the everyday mundane.

Such times as we have seen in category I--the purely supernatural Otherworld times--include varied descriptions of music heard, generally portrayed as the eternal, continuous music of the Christian Heaven or the primal tir tairnngiri, the Land of Promise. In the music references from this Collection, it appears that the early Irish believed that the Otherworld has an inherently musical or harmonic quality to it; it also appears as though they believed that the supernatural character of the music is special to the Otherworld.

The category II times are those liminal times which are special threshold times when the boundaries of this world and the Otherworld may be crossed. Such liminal times are considered to be normal and everyday much of the time, yet, occasionally, something unusual can possibly happen then regarding music, but not necessarily always. Such liminal times might be birth, death, dawn, dusk, twilight, or at one of the four special festival points of the early Irish year.

At such times, intervention from the Otherworld can occur, often transforming the lives of mortals. These liminal times became known in early Ireland as special times when one might possibly hear supernatural music sometimes, but not always. Such times are special as they serve as time portals or border points, i.e., a very specific "window of time", in our modern-day terminology, by the possible intervention of some super-

natural Otherworld force that is also described as having musical qualities. However, although such an unusual incident may happen then, such unusual events do not always happen then, only occasionally.

It seems as though the early Irish, in this literature, are reluctant to draw an absolutely explicit line between this world and the Otherworld. Liminality implies transcendence; and, as such, it is as though there is an inherent potential to experience an unusual event at a liminal time, in which a unique interplay of place and time occurs, creating a situation where the normal boundaries of everyday place and time intersect with divine place and time.

Category III times are times mentioned in reference to everyday life, for example, the canonical hours in monastic life, or, the time of a fair at the festival of samhain or bealtaine. The time of night, of morning, or noon, are sometimes designated in reference to events and/or activities in everyday life. Singing and the playing of musical instruments was clearly enjoyed in everyday life in early Ireland, from the homes and fields of the people at work each day, to the courts of the kings and noblemen.

A certain time--that of "eternity" and its characteristic "timelessness"--always seems to be described or implied among the supernatural and liminal times, while it rarely is portrayed in the everyday references. In the more overtly Christian examples, we often hear descriptions of the constant, beautiful music of Heaven, or, for example, of the constant, supernatural music of the stone

in the Land of the Saints [see Coll. Ref. No. 134]. In the more overtly primal examples, we see references to the unceasing music of tir tairngiri ("The Land of Promise") or the continuous beautiful music of sidhe birds [see Coll. Ref. Nos. 110 and 120]. In the everyday life examples from this Collection, time is always spoken of in our earthly terms, i.e., a more specific time like noon, evening, or the canonical hours.

The material in the overtly Christian contexts parallels that of those in the overtly primal contexts, creating an overall impression of a great similarity in the descriptions of the times when music is described as being heard in this literature. Also, it appears that the early Irish believed that music has, more often than not, a linkage or connection to the Otherworld, and that one was considered fortunate to have musical talents, or have the honor of hearing supernatural music at a liminal time, for example.

In some cases, descriptions of times in the purely supernatural realms use similar imagery to those used in the everyday examples. For instance, the beautiful, continuous music of the Tree of Life in Christian Paradise, or the three trees of purple glass in the primal Otherworld, are nearly identical to those in the liminal and everyday life descriptions, where we have the constant "music of the pines" in the everyday life of a hermit monk, for example. Here, all describe time in relation to its continuous quality, be it in everyday life or in the Otherworld.

When these categories are placed side by side, as we have seen, one can notice a certain parallelism in imagery and

description from the Otherworld places and times to those places and times described as pertaining to this world of everyday life. Overall, it seems that the early Irish felt that the Otherworld dimension could occasionally intervene in the everyday affairs of mankind in a musical way, indicating a possible belief in the power of music--especially at liminal times, to connect one to a divine source of some type.

The canonical hours are mentioned in this literature as being special times in the everyday life of a church or monastery. Vespers and the canonical hours are also specifically mentioned in the Otherworld examples, where the continuous, eternal music of the Land of the Saints is heard; here, the canonical hours and Vespers are also mentioned specifically, the birds of the Tree of Life sing psalms and hymns to God. [see Coll. Ref. Nos. 76, 82, 134]

The canonical hours were clearly very important as an integral part of everyday monastic life and "are referred to as the Divine Office ...St. Benedict speaks of seven offices in the day and one in the night. Eight times a day, then, the monks met to sing the Psalms, listen to scriptural readings, and offer prayers so that the presence of Christ, so strongly evoked in the Mass, was recalled...It is highly significant that there were seven services by day and one by night, as we recognize in this number an octave...As the movements of the celestial spheres obey the musica mundana, the daily life of the monks follows the musica humana, and their voices, the musica instrumentalis. As above, so below" comments musicologist Dr. Katherine Le Mee when discussing the

power of Gregorian chant. Again, we can see an interplay between the everyday setting of the church or monastery, and the time of day or night that the chants were sung. (34) Also in certain references from this Collection, the canonical hours are also mentioned in exclusively Otherworld contexts--implying that there, too, in God's eternity, the canonical hours are observed.

Hence the parallelism between the overtly primal and the overtly Christian contexts, as well as the continuity between the otherworldly and the everyday is clear once more when one considers the times in which the music is heard, and perhaps especially at the liminal times. Samhain, for example, is mentioned in the liminal category [see Ref. Nos. 55, 91-3, 98, 100], where, at this special festival time of year, often Samhain eve, the Otherworld is much more likely to intervene into daily life. Lughnasadh, too, generally occurs in descriptions of fairs held at this liminal time [see Ref. Nos. 12, 13, 30, 95] The continuous "music" of the rivers or trees as a celebration of God's creation as portrayed in everyday Christian hermit life can be compared to the mention of continuous music and trees in the Otherworld, be they in more overtly primal or overtly Christian contexts.

So, as one studies this Collection, it seems that although the early Irish viewed time in everyday life in earthly, mundane terms much like we do now, they also seem to have placed more emphasis on being constantly aware in the course of everyday life of certain times--at dawn, dusk, twilight, at a birth or death, etc.--in which the music of the Otherworld might be heard. Generally, it seems as

though music was seen as integral to all of life, and the times in which it was heard were honored and observed. They seem to be saying that the ultimate music, so to speak, the Otherworld music of the spheres, is always present in and around us every day, if only we could be more aware of it.



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### CONCLUSION

As we have seen under each of the five chapters--Performers, Instruments, Effects, Places, and Times--there appears to be a continuity across what would otherwise seem to be the distinct areas of the otherworldly and the mundane, and also across the divide between those references from the Collection with overtly Christian and overtly primal contexts. This Collection of literary references regarding music in early medieval Irish culture seems to indicate a sense of an unbroken line that joins the sacred and the profane, so that the former can seem both the source and the goal of the latter.

This unbroken line may be portrayed as a visual continuum, i.e., a Register--one extreme being the most mundane, everyday portrayal of reality, and the other, incapsulating those references that are portrayed as being the most supernatural and otherworldly in character. The grey area in the middle, the liminal area of reality, indicates those situations where it is very difficult to conclude exactly, from the references themselves, where this world ends and the Otherworld begins.

[\_\_\_\_\_ { \_\_\_\_\_ } \_\_\_\_\_]

Mundane and  
Everyday  
reality

Liminal  
[where the mundane  
ends and the  
supernatural begins]

Supernatural  
reality,  
the Otherworld

As our modern, twentieth-century analytic mind tends to distinguish reality in very separate categories, it may be initially a challenge for a modern Westerner to thoroughly grasp

the concept of liminal. It makes our rational minds uneasy as it is not a black or white category. We have been so conditioned to this view of reality that the journey back to the early medieval Irish mindset is indeed a challenge, but also an opportunity. The early Irish lived in a different era than ours, and in order to properly analyse their literary references as they pertain to their perspective of reality, we must attempt to be prepared to accept not only the possible existence of a transcendent, supernatural reality itself, but, to go one step further, to accept that this is ever-present in some manner in our daily lives, and that music is often the medium of the encounter. In other words, at any time, or place, under certain circumstances, it appears to have been believed by the early Irish that an unusual encounter could possibly occur and that this encounter frequently involved music. Our modern Western perspective tends to be very dualist--i.e., god/world; body/soul, etc.--which is very good for rational thinking and analysis. However, we tend to shun the categories of the supernatural and the liminal in our modern lives, preferring instead to believe that rational, dualist scientific analysis can solve and make sense of everything "some day". Ironically, the early Irish might say that this mythical "some day" could well be "every day", as they accepted the premise that this inherently mysterious Otherworld is not only real, but that it should be acknowledged and celebrated, not ignored.

The introductory chapter (Chapter One) argues that one does not need a final philosophy of the meaning of music in order to see

music as one dramatist sees theatre--as something which tests the world and registers its reality for early Irish society. As such a Reality Register, then, the Collection of references to music helps to illustrate how the early Irish viewed music as important and ever-present, in some form, in everyday life, and also, how fluid their basic concept of reality seems to have been, judging from the wide range of references in general, and those in the liminal category in particular. We will begin with the Performers, and take a closer look at how the early Irish viewed them.

### Performers

In the references to Performers from this Collection, one can see that there are clearly more performers listed in the supernatural category than in the mundane.

This alone tells us something about the early Irish viewpoint of music--that it was clearly believed to have some kind of supernatural source, power or influence(s) from the Otherworld a large amount of the time. In the mundane categories a variety of musical performers are involved as part of the course of everyday life in early Irish society, such as monks and nuns singing their canonical hours, the music of a nobleman's party, or court musicians entertaining a king. This we might expect for an early medieval society. However, what we might not expect are such unusual supernatural performers as the mermaids discovered by travelling clergymen out at sea, sidhe harpers portrayed as singing to Christian clergy, a severed head entertaining a court after a battle, and the music of three precious stones in the

Christian Heaven, singing along with the saints, archangels, and the Tree of Life and its birds. Such clearly supernatural portrayals of musical performers, and the frequency of it in this literature, seems to indicate a value system based on the inclusion of supernatural music into everyday life.

Regarding the supernatural performers in overtly primal contexts, one may note that they are mainly portrayed as sidhe performers, usually playing an instrument and/or singing. But a fair amount of this material is not as easy to classify, consisting of such unusual types of performers as the music of sidhe birds, a severed head, the music of the streams of tir tairngiri, the musical branch, etc. The general type of overtly primal context supernatural performer portrayed in this literature, if not clearly a sidhe performer, is generally portrayed as relating to the natural elements--for example, the "music" of the streams of tir tairngiri ("The Land of Promise"), or the music of the plains of the Otherworld, a "many-melodied land", etc. Trees are often portrayed with singing birds on them in the Otherworld, as described in the overtly primal contexts, as well as sometimes portrayed as having a unique harmony all their own.

In the references with overtly Christian contexts, the supernatural musical performers are initially what one might expect for portrayals of the Christian Heaven or Paradise, with many angels, archangels, and saints, all singing in harmony to God. The surprise here comes with the very large number of supernatural performers portrayed as musicians in the Christian Heaven who are

somewhat unusual--i.e., birds singing the canonical hours in harmony on the Tree of Life, three precious stones, mermaids on an island paradise, and the beautiful music of the hills and plains of Heaven, for example. It seems that here, too, like in the overtly primal context examples above, the early Irish seem to feel that such unusual supernatural performers are an important and integral part of Heaven/the Otherworld.

The early Irish performed their music at the obvious places within their daily environment--at a king's court, a monastery, at fairs or festivals in the community, and at a nobleman's house party--i.e., nearly everywhere in their daily lives; music appears to have been an integral part of their society at nearly every level.

Regarding those everyday music references in overtly Christian contexts, one may be surprised to see many references to the music of more unusual types of performers in everyday life--although not as many as those in the purely supernatural category. The everyday Christian world, and its supernatural counterpart--Heaven or Paradise--both heavily favor singers. It appears that the Christians, especially the hermit monks as portrayed in their environment(s) of solitude and prayer, heavily valued music in their daily lives. Most of the everyday Christian musical performers do so in a monastic environment, whether a church, monastery itself, or, out in the wilderness in or around their hermit's hut, as one would expect, but, the emphasis tends to be on the constant, unceasing chanting of the monks.



In the middle category of musical performers, we have those few mortal performers with Otherworldly influences of some type--such as saints who encounter musical performers in Heaven or Paradise, or the talented harpist Corainn's music summoning a deadly dragon, for example. Most of these type of references deal with several descriptions of transport to/from the Otherworld dimension--in those with overtly primal contexts, it was either from a mortal performer playing a musical instrument, or, it was from a sleep or dream state. In those references with overtly Christian contexts, many of the saints got to the Otherworld dimension (Heaven) during deep and intense prayer, during the course of an illness or during singing psalms or hymns. The reader may note that in these special instances of transport between this world and the Otherworld or Heaven, the performers are portrayed in this literature as crossing the boundaries in a very fluid manner--very unlike our modern dualistic categorization of reality. This may possibly indicate that the early Irish view of life--as shown by this possibility that one may have such a unique experience in everyday life--is a more holistic one, incorporating the Otherworld into everyday, mundane life. The early Irish seem to have felt that the performing of music--be it mundane or supernatural--could be done by a multitude of performers, some quite unusual, from this world or from the Otherworld.

Thus, it is the music itself that clearly binds all the members of this continuum together in what appears to be an unbroken line of musical performers, up to and including the ultimate super-

natural source of the ultimate perfect music. Just as there seems to be a parallel continuity in the overtly Christian and the overtly primal context references, there is also a certain parallelism in the "personnel" of musical performers at each level in these two sets of sources. This parallelism of "personnel" occurs on down through those selected mortal musical performers in everyday life. This parallelism would seem to indicate an acknowledgement of the continuity of line of musical performers and, as a consequence, of some supernatural influence(s)--in both primal and Christian terms.

### Instruments

As one might expect for an early medieval primal Celtic society, harps, fiddles, bagpipes, timpani, trumpets, pipes, whistles, horns and bells are all commonly portrayed instruments. One might take note, however, of other types of instruments or everyday tools that might have been thought of by the early Irish as instruments--such as chariot wheels, fishing nets, swords in battle, bones, the sounds of water, the wind through the trees, the blacksmith's anvil, etc. Regarding the supernatural instruments from those references with overtly primal contexts, harps predominate, but with a few surprises added in, including musical branches, mermaids' voices, the voice of a severed head, and a stone, for example. The supernatural instruments, in those references with overtly Christian contexts, in general include voices, featuring the vocal music of angels/saints, birds in Heaven, mermaids, and bells.

In both the overtly primal and overtly Christian contexts, an important and interesting subcategory of supernatural instrument emerges--that of what may be termed "Mysterious or Unknown Music"--i.e., where supernatural, ghostly music is heard, yet no performers or instruments themselves are seen. It is as if the instrument(s) here are invisible, coming directly from the Otherworld or Heaven. One may note that the majority of instruments referred to in the overtly primal contexts are portrayed as mundane/everyday type of instruments as opposed to supernatural instruments. The examples with overtly Christian contexts, however, show an opposite situation--here, the clear majority are in the supernatural Instruments category, with a few in the others.

Regarding the supernatural instruments, in those with overtly primal contexts one may again note a preference for musical instruments over voices--with the timpan (timpan) and harp (cruitt) predominating. The instruments in the mundane, everyday contexts show no stones at all--apparently, this concept of a "singing stone" as a type of musical instrument is reserved exclusively for the supernatural Otherworld, be it an overtly primal or overtly Christian context. As to why, we can only conjecture--perhaps the idea of a "singing stone" was so unusual and special to the early Irish, that it was viewed as a supernatural musical instrument at times. One does see many references to swords being described as musical instruments in the overtly primal contexts, but none at all in the Christian; the Christian references tend to emphasize spiritual warfare rather than earthly warfare.

The middle category of musical instruments describes those few but unique musical instruments that are portrayed as having some type of supernatural/Otherworld influence, such as when a harp hears a secret (overtly primal context), or when a saint's bell magically "appears" from nowhere just in time to begin Mass (overtly Christian context). Here we find a lot of tree imagery associated with instruments--as when a birch tree grows out of the handle of St. Patrick's bell, or, the wood from a special grove of trees becomes a magic harp. Much of the material in the references with overtly Christian contexts deals with the power of the saint's bell to serve as a "bell of wrath" on his enemies, to exorcise demons, or to sound on Doomsday. The issue of kingship comes up in the overtly primal contexts, for example, the reference where the double pipes made from a particular grove of tree saplings are directly related to the young man becoming king--portrayed as a powerful instrument indeed.

Under the "Instruments" category, we also see a continuity across what would otherwise seem the distinct areas of the other-worldly and the mundane, the supernatural and the natural, and indeed across the divide between overtly Christian and the overtly primal contexts. Thus, a single instrument like a harp, for example, can convey through the various references to it in this Collection, a sense of the unbroken line that joins this world and the Otherworld.

### Effects

The effects of music from the overtly primal contexts show

many effects, such as the ability of music to put the listener into a trance-like sleep state, to cause great joy or ecstasy, or deep melancholy in the listener. These famous "three strains"--suantraigi, genntraigi, and golltraigi--are portrayed as especially powerful effects. Perhaps a bit surprising is the rather high amount of fear also caused by the music of the Otherworld, where such music is described as having dangerous, deadly, or melancholic effects. Apparently, if one may conjecture, the music of the primal Otherworld is mysterious, joyful, trance-like, and beautiful, yet it is often to be greatly feared as well. Music as having the power to summon something (often an animal) or someone (usually a sidhe personage) to the musician is portrayed as a special type of effect, and the ability of the music of the Otherworld to be used to inspire or teach other musicians, be relaxing, healing, or grant prosperity is portrayed. Music is also shown to have protective and prosperous effects, to be involved in the future prophecy of a king's realm and to be offered as a gift from the sidhe beings, clearly a special effect.

In the analysis of the portrayals of the effects of music in Heaven/Paradise in the overtly Christian contexts, one may note that the overwhelming majority say the music is joyful/ecstatic--clearly a very positive effect. Other effects, such as the ability of the music of Heaven to put one to sleep, the overall protective effects of the saint's bell, or of a saint chanting or singing psalms are felt to be especially valuable effects. The power of the saint's bell, used as a curse or the saint's chanting or

singing what are described as malefic hymns/psalms toward the uncooperative or unGodly, show the effects of the music. In this category of effects of music with overtly Christian contexts, one can see many references to what is termed "Mysterious/Unknown music"--the mysterious music of Heaven, with no performers or instruments seen. Unlike those references with overtly primal contexts, here there are no references at all to the "three strains" phenomenon. Similar to the overtly primal contexts, we also have portrayed here the effect of music to inspire or teach, and as healing/therapeutic, etc.

The mundane, everyday effects of music in an overtly primal context show a majority of effects of the music of the various natural elements, as part of battle or warfare.

A unique subcategory for Effects deals with those unusual situations where a mortal hears Otherworldly music on earth, then visits the Otherworld or Heaven, and then returns back to everyday life--a situation identically experienced by a nobleman, (Bran), a king, (Cormac), two saints (St. Patrick and St. Fursa) and Cuchulainn's charioteer (Loeg). Another such situation is where a saint from Heaven (St. Michael) shapeshifts into a musical bird, visits a mortal saint (St. Brendan), and then returns to Heaven. All of these type of examples show an unusual fluidity between this world and the next, as portrayed by these references from early Irish literature. The music here is often a lure to go to the Otherworld or Heaven, a special "transporting" effect. It is the bridge between the worlds.

But the major issue with the effects category is the fact that it appears that the more dramatic an musical effect is described, the more supernatural the context is--be it portrayed as an overtly primal or an overtly Christian context. The supernatural music of the Otherworld, it would appear from this Collection, runs right down into everyday life, reaching up to the heights (mountains, for example) and the depths (the sea, wells) of mundane, everyday life experience. One never seems to know for sure, it appears, just when--or where--one might encounter the supernatural music of the Otherworld, or Heaven, and its effects. The one certainty seems to be that the music of the Otherworld is so powerful and often beautiful, that it is clearly not of this world, and the references from this Collection make it clear by designating its difference from more normal, mundane type(s) of music. It seems as though the degree of supernatural influence tends to determine the degree of how dramatic the effect is on the listener. This seems to apply for both the overtly primal and the overtly Christian contexts.

### Places

Generally, the places where music is heard is in and around the daily environment--i.e., in the overtly primal contexts, the court of a king, the sites of battlefields, fairs, festivals, cairns, and those outdoor places in the daily environment such as hills and mounds. In the overtly Christian contexts, the everyday places where music is heard are the environment around a hermit monk's hut, a monastery or a church environment. All of these one

might expect.

However, the liminal places category indicates some places that may seem a bit more unusual, such as a mountain-side entrance to a sidhe dwelling, the doorway of a sidhe-woman's abode on an island paradise, or at the edge of a window sill. These places show again, a fluidity between this world and the Otherworld or Heaven. At such locations, the boundaries between this earthly, mundane world and the supernatural Otherworld or Heaven intersect, creating a special place that may be seen to serve as a type of portal or entry to another dimension.

One may again notice a double parallelism throughout this literature and in what the early Irish seem to believe about music, and the places at which it is heard. It appears that they felt there was a continuous line of influence throughout the places where music was heard, especially the liminal places. It seems as though they clearly believe that at the proper place and in the correct circumstances, this world and the Otherworld could meet and encounter each other, using music as a means of communication.

### Times

Since "unceasing/continuous" is the closest creatures can come to the concept of eternity, these characteristics applied to music indicate its timeless, that is, eternal nature, and so indicate the references to music which we may place in a section that we would call "otherworldly" or "supernatural"; practices such as singing the canonical hours in their regularity and continuity come as close as creatures can come to imitate or participate in such



"otherworldly" conditions.

In those references with overtly primal contexts which describe the primal Otherworld, the concept of "unceasing or continuous" music is constantly emphasized. In describing this "continuous music" environment, the unceasing music of the plains and land(s) of the Otherworld clearly predominates, followed by music heard continuously at island paradises, and the unceasing, continuous music of trees, birds, wells, streams, fountains, and stones, for example.

The times at which music is heard in the Christian Heaven or Paradise is also portrayed as being of a continuous, eternal nature. Here, birds are specifically portrayed as singing the canonical hours in harmony on the Tree of Life. Three precious stones continuously sing music in praise of God, also reflecting this unceasing, eternal quality. The only insects portrayed in the Christian Otherworld are the bees which continuously sing to the flowers on an island paradise.

The everyday, mundane times when music might be heard in the overtly primal contexts frequently mention the times of a battle and at a fair or festival; the everyday, mundane times when music is heard in the overtly Christian contexts is during Mass and at Vespers. However, the future time of Doomsday is mentioned quite frequently, with the traditional Old Testament time period of "forty days and forty nights" referred to when speaking of St. Patrick. The time of an ordination ceremony and winter time, with its curious absence of music, are mentioned by the hermit monks in

their poetry. But by far the most frequently portrayed time in everyday Christian life is simply "continuous"--i.e., all the time, with the "music" of the natural elements like the wind through the trees, the rivers' torrents, the birds' singing, the sea's waves, etc. It certainly appears that the hermit monks very greatly valued this type of "music" in their everyday life, and mention it with such frequency overall that one cannot help but to take note of it.

The liminal times at which music is heard in the overtly primal contexts reveal that the time of Samhain eve, especially, is a special one at which to hear the supernatural music of the Otherworld. Clearly the vast majority of times that music is heard at festivals is at Samhain eve (Nov. 1) and at Lughnasadh eve (Aug. 1); there are no references to Imbolc (Feb. 2) or to Beltaine (May 1). In the more overtly Christian contexts involving time(s), one can clearly see that the moment of a saint's death is the most frequently mentioned liminal time, followed by the moment of a saint's birth. This is in great contrast to the primal context liminal examples, where no references at all occur to the issue of either birth or death. It appears as though in the overtly primal contexts, Samhain eve was the most liminal time to hear supernatural music, but from the perspective of the overtly Christian contexts, the moment of a saint's death was most likely to involve the music of Heaven in some manner.

The issue(s) about why there is a total lack of mention of the festival of Imbolc (Feb. 2) as having music, and of the far less

frequent mention of Beltaine (May 1) than what one would probably expect, are interesting ones for further analysis and reflection. Clearly, Samhain eve and Lughnasadh eve were regarded as especially liminal in some way in the early Irish primal society--times when the boundaries between this world and the Otherworld were especially thin.

\* \* \* \* \*

In this overall effort to collect and catalogue the music references, and to attempt to look at the early Irish and their understanding of music, it is clear that they consistently make reference to music--especially supernatural music--no matter what the context. There seems to be a continuity in imagery across what would otherwise seem to be the wholly separate areas of the otherworldly and the mundane. There also seems to be parallel imagery used across the divide of the overtly primal and the overtly Christian contexts. This unbroken line of the issue of supernatural music in this literature touches the very heights of existence and the very depths of everyday life. The whole of creation seems to radiate a harmony in this literature, from the music of the natural elements all around one, to the indescribably beautiful supernatural music of Heaven. That music seems to be portrayed by this society as "the great connector"--i.e., as a criteria to either go to, or, conversely, be visited by an Otherworldly personage, and that says something about the early Irish viewpoint of life itself. Rather than see life in black/white or either/or terms as we tend to do in the twentieth

century, life instead seems to be portrayed by the early Irish as an ever-moving, ever-changing, ever-shifting reality between what we now call the mundane, everyday and the supernatural Otherworld.

In such a world-view, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to try and discern where one begins and the other ends. Its inherent dynamism prevents such limitations--we must instead open up to the mystery of life itself, and of music and harmony as an integral part of it. One gets the impression from this Collection and its references to music that the mundane and the supernatural are perhaps like the yin and the yang--each contains a bit of the other, with music as the connector between the two, as the mundane and the Otherworldly dimension constantly interpenetrate each other.

In the words of Irish playwright Stewart Parker, play is how a society experiments, imagines, invents and moves forward; play is the means by which people test the world and register its realities. Perhaps, as has been suggested, one could say the same about music. And one could then see from what the early Irish texts say about music, that music revealed to them a reality more like a seamless continuum from the mundane to the heights we now term "otherworld" or "supernatural", thus offering us an alternative to our hard dualisms, and indeed also a clearer view of the way in which the Christian can enculture itself in the "primal"--both lessons of possible value to this day.

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The Relationship between Music  
and the Supernatural  
as that is portrayed in  
Early Medieval Irish literature

by

Karen M. O'Keefe

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for the  
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A P P E N D I X

(A Collection of  
Music References  
from the  
literature of  
Early Medieval Ireland)

by

Karen M. O'Keefe

### N O T E: re: Manuscript Dating

In the following Collection of music references, a listing of which manuscript(s) were used, and the dates of them, are included in the "Approximate Dating:" section. The system used for this general classification of manuscripts was that determined by Celtic scholars R.I. Best and Rolf Baumgarten, of the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies. They have published three volumes of a Bibliography of Irish Literature, as follows, which this author has used throughout this Collection, as it is considered to be the standard reference work in the field of Irish literature classification:

- 1) Title: Bibliography of Irish Philology and Literature  
(Irish literature up to 1912), Dublin, 1913.  
Author: R.I. Best (Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies)
- 2) Title: Bibliography of Irish Philology and Literature  
(1913-1941 Irish literature), Dublin, 1969.  
Author: R.I. Best (Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies)
- 3) Title: Bibliography of Irish Philology and Literature  
(1942-1971 Irish literature), Dublin, 1986.  
Author: Rolf Baumgarten (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies)

For material published since 1971, this author personally read through the scholarly journal articles to obtain any other references to music that may be there. The Best/Baumgarten Bibliographies are invaluable in the field of Celtic studies,

as they also have categorized the literature into standard divisions, which this author has also adhered to throughout, as follows:

- 1) tales from the Mythological Cycle
- 2) place-lore (Dindshenchas)
- 3) tales from the Ulster Cycle
- 4) tales from the Cycle of the Kings literature
- 5) the Immrama ("Voyage" literature)
- 6) tales from the Acallam na Senorach
- 7) early Irish poetry
- 8) early Irish saint's lives (saints who lived from the 5th-9th c.'s)

The material selected for this thesis is classified into these eight categories, pertaining to what Celtic scholars call the early Irish period; i.e., the material and manuscripts written in the Old/Middle Irish languages and pertaining to the pre-Norman period. Of course, given the overall situation in which these early Irish manuscripts were written down in the monasteries, we have a situation where many of the manuscripts that use the Old/Middle Irish language and pertain to this earlier period are themselves of the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. (i.e., one may see that the manuscript is dated "fourteenth century", or perhaps later, for a tale that is known to cover the period before the twelfth century by Celtic scholars who generally agree that the material it covers addresses the early medieval Irish time period.) Thus, this author has remained with the Best/Baumgarten system of manuscript and literature classification(s) and to the general early medieval Irish period as defined by the Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies in their publications.



## MYTHOLOGICAL CYCLE

[Number 1]

Name of Tale: "Aislinge Oenguso"  
"The Dream of Oengus"

Manuscript: From Egerton 1782, fol. 70b.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. [tale known by 9th c.]

Old Ir. Text: "...Co n-accae timpán inna láim as bindem boíe.  
Sennid céol [n]do. Con-tuil friss."

Source: Shaw, F., Aislinge Oenguso, London, 1934, p. 43-44.

[1a] Translation:

"...he saw a lute in her hand, the sweetest that ever was; she played a tune to him, and he fell asleep at it."

Source: Jackson, K.H., A Celtic Miscellany, London, 1971,  
p. 93.

[1b]: Translation:

"...then he saw a timpan in her hand, the sweetest ever, and she played for him until he fell asleep."

Source: Gantz, J., Early Irish Myths and Sagas, London,  
1971, p. 108.

Location of Music: Private quarters of king Oengus

Audience: Oengus

Performer: A woman seen in a dream-like vision

Instrument: A timpan

Char.'s of Music:

1.1: very "sweet" music; described as "the sweetest that ever was"

Effects of Music:

1.a: listener falls asleep

Name of Tale: "Catha Maige Tuired I"  
"The First Battle of Moytura"

Manuscript: From part of a collection, H.2.17, in the library of  
Trinity College, Dublin, p. 90-99. [15th c.]

Approximate Dating: tale known by 10th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Otchuala an Dagdha coigedal na cloidem a coimn[e]rt  
in chomlainn, tainic ina lesglemeanta, 7 ina buinne dighair deoesa  
gu hinadh na hurrlaide."

Source: Fraser, J., "The First Battle of Moytura", Eriu 8,  
Dublin, 1916, p. 46.

[2]: Translation:

"As soon as the Dagda heard the music of the swords in the  
battle-stress, he hastened to the place of conflict with deliberate  
bounds, like the rush of a great waterfall."

Source: Ibid., p. 47.

Location of Music: A battlefield

Audience: The Dagda, and the warriors in battle

Performer: Warriors with their swords

Instrument: Swords "clinking" in battle, described as musical

Char.'s of Music:

2.1: the Dagda describes hearing the "music" of the swords

Effects of Music:

2.a: As a result, the Dagda feels the situation is an emergency,  
and rushes to the battle scene immediately

Name of Tale: "Catha Maige Tuired II"  
"The Second Battle of Mag Tured"

Manuscript: Harl. 5280. [15th c.]

Approximate Dating: tale known by 10th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Loutar andiaid na Fomore dno Lug 7 an Daghdou 7 Ogma, ar cruitire an Dagda ron-ucsad leo, Uáitniu a ainm [fo. 70b]. Rosaghad ierum a flettech a mboi Bres mac Elathan 7 Elathan mac Delbaith. Is ann boi in crot for in fraighid. Is si in cruit sin ara nenaisc [in Dagdae] na ceola conna rofograighsetor tria gairm co ndegart in Dagda intan atbert annso sis:

Tair Daur-dablao,  
Tair coir cethar chuir,  
Tair sam, tair gam,  
beola crot 7 bolg 7 buinne.

Dá n-ainm dno batar foran cruit-sin .i. Dur-dabla 7 coir-cethairchuir. Doluid an crot assan froig ierum, 7 marbaid nónbor, 7 tanuicc docum an Dagda, 7 sepainn side a trédhi fora nemithir cruitiri doib .i. súantraigi 7 genntraigi 7 golltraigi. Sepainn golltraigi doib co ngolsad a mna déracha. Sepainn genntraigi doib co tibsíot a mna 7 a macraith. Sepainn suantraigi doib co tuilset an tsluaigh. Is de sén díerlátar a triur slan uaidib ciamadh ail a ngoin."

Source: Stokes, W., "Cath Maige Tured II", RC 12, Paris, 1891, p. 108.

[3]: Translation:

"Now Lug and the Dagda and Ogma pursued the Fomorians, for they had carried off the Dagda's harper, whose name was Uaitne. Then they reached the banqueting house in which were Bres, son of Elatha and Elatha, son of Delbaeth. There hung the harp on the wall. That is the harp in which the Dagda had bound the melodies so that they sounded not until by his call he summoned them forth; when he said this below:

Come Daurdabla!  
Come Coir-cethar-chuir!  
Come summer, come winter!  
Mouths of harps and bags and pipes!

Now that harp had two names, Daur-da-bla "Oak of two greens", and Coir-cethar-chuir, "Four-angled music". Then the harp went forth from the wall, and killed nine men, and came to the Dagda. And he played for them the three things whereby harpers are distinguished, to wit, sleep-strain and smile-strain and wail-strain. He played wail-strain to them, so that their tearful women wept. He played

[Number 3, con'd]

smile-strain to them, so their women and children laughed. He played sleep-strain to them, and the hosts fell asleep. Through that sleep the three of them escaped unhurt from the Fomorians though these desired to slay them."

Source: Ibid., p. 109.

Location of Music: banqueting house

Audience: all those attending the banquet

Performer: The Dagda

Instrument: Harp [cruit] summoned from the wall

#### Char.'s of Music:

- 3.1: sleep-strain (suantraigi)
- 3.2: smile-strain (genntraigí)
- 3.3: wail-strain (golltraigi)

#### Effects of Music:

- 3.a: audience fell asleep
- 3.b: audience laughed
- 3.c: audience wept
- 3.d: Lug, the Dagda, and Ogma were able to escape from the Fomorians due to the audience falling asleep. Issue of music used as a technique of distraction/deception in warfare.
- 3.e: harp kills nine men
- 3.f: harp on the wall "responds" to the Dagda's summoning, bounces off the wall, and then comes directly to him

[Number 4]

Name of Tale: "Catha Maige Tuired II"  
"The Second Battle of Mag Tured"

Manuscript: Harl. 5280 [15th c.]

Approximate Dating: tale known by 10th c.

Old Ir. Text: "'Seindter cruitt duin,' alid sluaig. Sephaind iarum an t-oglaech suantraige dona sluagaib 7 don righ an cét-oid-qui. Focairtt a suan on trath co'-raili. Sephaim golltraigi co mbatar oc caei 7 ac dogra. Sephaim gendtraigi co mbatar hi subai 7 a forbfáilti."

Source: Stokes, W., "Cath Maige Tured II", RC 12,  
Paris, 1891, p. 80.

[4]: Translation:

"'Let a harp be played for us,' said the hosts. So the warrior [Lug S.] played a sleep-strain for the hosts and for the king the first night. He cast them into sleep from that hour to the same time on the following day. He played a wail-strain, so that they were crying and lamenting. He played a laugh-strain, so that they were in merriment and joyance."

Source: Ibid., p. 81.

Location of Music: hall of the king

Audience: the king's guests, called "hosts" here

Performer: Lug

Instrument: harp [cruit]

Char.'s of Music:

4.1: sleep-strain (suantraigi)

4.2: wail-strain (golltraigi)

4.3: laugh-strain (genntraig)

Effects of Music:

4.a: audience falls asleep for period of one day

4.b: audience cries and laments

4.c: audience experiences merriment and joy

[Number 5]

Name of Tale: "Catha Maige Tuired II"  
"The Second Battle of Mag Tured"

Manuscript: Harl. 5280 [15th c.]

Approximate Dating: tale known by 10th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Atbert-sum diridesi: `Atom-athcomairc,' ar se,  
`am crutiri.' `Nit-regaim [fo. 65b] a les: ata cruitiri lenn cenai  
.i. Abhcan mac Bicelmois aran-utgatar fir tri ndea i sidoib.'"

Source: Stokes, W., "Cath Maige Tured II", RC 12,  
Paris, 1891, p. 76.

[5]: Translation:

[Upon reaching the doorkeeper of Tara, Lug is questioned about his artistic abilities, before being allowed to enter, as no one without any art is allowed in]:

"...He [Lug] said again: `Question me: I am a harper.' `We need thee not. We have a harper already, even Abhcan, son of Bicelmos whom the three gods {ref.: Tuatha de Danaan} chose in the fairy mounds.'"

Source: Ibid., p. 77.

Location of Music: the entrance gate to Tara

Audience: [No music is heard; music ability is discussed.]

Performer: [No music is heard; music ability is discussed.]

Instrument: harp

Char.'s of Music:

5.1: "the best harpist", (i.e., Bicelmos, a sidhe harpist) is said by the doorkeeper of Tara to be the best in the land, therefore Lugh's skills are not needed.

Effects of Music: None specifically

Note: Here, having music ability (or not) is viewed as a criterion for a decision as to whether or not one is qualified to enter Tara, the center of kingship.

[Number 6]

Name of Tale: "Catha Maige Tuired II"  
"The Second Battle of Mag Tured"

Manuscript: Harl. 5280 [15th c.]

Approximate Dating: tale known by 10th c.

Old Ir. Text: "...Dian-cecht 7 a dí mac 7 a ingen .i. Ochtriuil 7 Airmedh 7 Miach, oc dicetul for an tibrat .i. Slaine a hainm. Focertdidis a n-athgóite indte immorro airlestis. Bótar bi notegdis esde. Bati slan a n-athgoite tre nert an dicetail na cethri lege robatar immon tibrat."

Source: Stokes, W., "Cath Maige Tured II", RC 12,  
Paris, 1891, p. 94.

[6]: Translation:

"...Dian-cecht and his two sons, even Ochtriuil and Miach, and his daughter Airmed, were singing spells over the well named Slane. Now their mortally wounded men were cast into it as soon as they would be slain. They were alive when they would come out. Their mortally wounded became whole through the might of the chant of the four leeches who were about the well."

Source: Ibid., p. 95

Location of Music: a well

Audience: mortally wounded men

Performers: Dian-cecht, the royal leech-physician, and Ochtriuil, Miach, and Airmed, his three children, singing spells over the well named Slane.

Instrument: a family of royal leech-physicians' voices/chants

Char.'s of Music:

6.1: the might of healing chants, by four leech-doctors

Effects of Music:

6.a: healing effects, elimination of pain and misery

6.b: rejuvenation of the dead from a well. (Rebirth/cauldron theme)

Name of Tale: "Lebor Gabala Erenn"  
"Book of Invasions of Ireland"

Manuscripts: Edited from various manuscripts: Book of Ballymote [15th c.]; Stowe collection at Trinity College Dublin [15th c.]; and LL [12th c.]

Approximate Dating: 15th c.

Old Ir. Text:

..."Is ē in Caithear sin dorighne leigheas dóibh dia mbái in murdūchaind aga mbrēgadh, .i. bái in collud aga forrach frisin ceól. Is ē leigheas fuair Caither dóib, .i. cēir do leaghadh na clūasaibh"...

Source: Macalister, R. A., Lebor Gabala Erenn Part II, Irish Texts Society Vol. 35, Dublin, 1939, p. 74-5.

[7] Translation: [refers to an incident on a voyage in the Caspian Sea, enroute to Ireland:]

..."This is that Caicher who made a remedy for them, when the sirens were playing them false: sleep was overcoming them at the music. This is a remedy which Caicher the druid found for them, to melt wax in their ears"...

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: island of sirens in the Caspian sea

Audience: men on a ship enroute to Ireland

Performers: sirens' singing

Instruments: voices

Char.'s of Music:

7.1: seductive music of the sirens

Effects of Music:

7.a: caused men to go to sleep on a sea journey

7.b: caused the druid Caicher to create an effective remedy to stop this effect of the music--namely putting wax in their ears

[NOTE: The theme of sirens attempting to lure men at sea to their island(s) with seductive singing/music is a theme similar to that found in other early writings, such as the events described as befalling Odysseus and his men in The Odyssey by Homer.]



Name of Tale: "Tochmarc Etaine"  
"The Wooing of Etaine"

Manuscript: Text from YBL, col. 985 (Nat. Lib. Ireland 4:Phillipps 8214) and of YBL (Trinity College Dublin) col. 876, Facs. 175a.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "Ba bindi cuslendaib 7 crotaib 7 cornairib fuaim a foghair 7 easnad a heiti."

Source: Bergin, O.J., and Best, R.I., "Tochmarc Etaine",  
Eriu 12, Dublin, 1938, p. 152.

[8]: Translation:

[Re: Etain, a sidhe woman, was turned into a scarlet fly by the evil sorceress Fuamnach; she then (as a fly) appears to her distressed sidhe lover Midir to comfort him:]

"Sweeter than pipes and harps and horns was the sound of her voice and the hum of her wings."

Source: Ibid., 153.

Location of Music: In close proximity to Midir

Audience: Midir

Performer: A fly (as Etain)

Instrument: a fly's "buzzing" sound is described as musical--and is said to be sweeter than the music of pipes (cuslendaib) harps (crotaib) and horns (cornairib)

Char.'s of Music:

8.1: Sweetness--of her "voice" as a fly, and the "hum" of wings

Effects of Music:

8.a: Comforting someone who is unhappy or distressed; entertaining them. (Perhaps a type of healing function, as with musical therapy.)

8.b: Music as a way of expressing love for someone

[Number 9]

Name of Tale: "Tochmarc Etaine"  
"The Wooing of Etaine"

Manuscript: Text from YBL, col. 985 (Nat. Lib. Ireland 4: Phillipps 8214) and of YBL (Trinity College Dublin) col. 876, Facs. 175a.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text:

"A Bé Fínd, in ragha lium a tír n-ingnadh i fil rind."

Source: Bergin, O.J., and Best, R.I., "Tochmarc Etaine",  
Eriu 12, Dublin, 1938, p. 180.

[9A]: Translation:

"O Be Find wilt thou come with me, to the wondrous land wherein harmony is..."

Source: Ibid., p. 181.

[9B]: Translation:

"Fair woman, will you go with me to a wonderful land where music is?"

Source: Jackson, K.H., A Celtic Miscellany, New York, 1971, p. 172.

[9C]: Translation:

"Wilt thou come to my home, fair-haired lady?, to dwell in the marvellous land of the musical spell..."

Source: Leahy, A.H., Heroic Romances of Ireland, Vol. I, London, 1905, p. 26.

[9D]: Translation:

"Be Find, will you come with me to a wondrous land where there is music?"

Source: Gantz, J., Early Irish Myths and Sagas, London, 1981, p. 55.

Location of Music: in Etaine's presence

Audience: Etaine, a sidhe woman

Performer: Midir, a man from the sidhe mounds

Instrument: Vocal; as Midir sings

Char.'s of Music:

9.1: None specifically mentioned; the singing is to woo a girl, like a modern-day serenade. (This reference is part of a long poetic lay sung by Midir to Etain.)

Effects of Music:

9.a: She does go with Midir so it was a successful wooing.

9.b: effect of the music still felt a year later; issue of the importance of the period of time of "one year" (and a day) in ancient Ireland.

Name of Tale: "Tochmarc Etaine"  
"The Wooing of Etaine"

Manuscript: Text from YBL col. 985 (Nat. Lib. Ireland 4: Phillipps 8214) and of YBL (Trinity College Dublin) col.876, Facs. 175a.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "...fo dhaigh ná rochar, Midir mnaí in tan atchidh an chuil corcraí, 7 níba sam céol na hól na longadh in tan nach aicedh 7 nach cluinedh a ceol 7 a foghar."

Source: Bergin, O.J., and Best, R.I., "Tochmarc Etaine",  
Eriu 12, Dublin, 1938, p. 154.

[10A]: Translation:

"...for whenever he saw the scarlet fly, Midir loved no other woman, and he found no pleasure in music or in drinking or eating when he did not see her and hear the music of her and her voice."

Source: Ibid., p. 155.

[10B]: Translation:

"....as long as he could watch the scarlet fly, Midir loved no women, and he did not enjoy food or drink or music, unless he could see it--[Etain, as a scarlet fly]--and listen to its music and its buzzing."

Source: Gantz, J., Early Irish Myths and Sagas, London, 1981, p. 46.

Location of Music: Close proximity to Midir

Audience: Midir

Performer: A fly (Etain, as a scarlet fly)

Instrument: A fly's wings and "buzzing" as musical

Char.'s of Music:

10.1: sweet' and comforting

Effects of Music:

10.a: Comforting to Midir in distress; a type of musical therapy

10.b: a fly's "buzzing" sound is described as helping someone who is lonely or distressed to enjoy eating, drinking, and other music, when this musical fly is present.

DINDSHENCHAS: PLACE-LORE

[Number 11]

Title: "Bend Etair I"

Manuscript: LL

Approximate Dating: 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "Drecht d'écsib ceta bátar  
cardáis tractad cech cetail  
is tšenchoss ardospeitted  
cid dia n-eper ainm Etair."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III,  
Dublin, 1913, p. 104.

[11]: Translation:

"A number of the poets who were the first  
loved a commentary on every song  
in the legend that chanted to them  
the reason why the name of Etar was given."

Source: Ibid., p. 105.

Location of Music: Bend Etair

Audience: none specific

Performer: poet(s)

Instrument: sung verse; poetic chants

Char.'s of Music:

11.1: poetic verse

Effects of Music:

11.a: sung poetic verse as a chanted legend, giving the reason  
why a place was so-named

[Number 12]

Title: "Carmun"

Manuscript: LL

Approximate Dating: 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: ... "Pípai, fidli, fir cengail,  
cnámfir ocus cuslennaig,  
sluag étig engach égair,  
béccaig ocus búridaig...

...Aitte, oirgne, aidbse cheóil,  
coimgne cinte cóem-cheneóil..."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III,  
Dublin, 1913, p. 20.

Notes by E. Gwynn: "as cengal is used for the refrain of a song, fir cengail may be singers of glee or catches." Also: although unlisted here: "oenach" for a fair. These annual tribal gatherings were held at Lughnasadh (August 1), and served the purpose of not only providing unity and amusements, but often provided an important forum for tribal chiefs and kings, were held at key burial sites, and may have also been an occasion for major tribal rituals.  
[p. 469-70]

[12]: Translation: [a description of the fair musicians]:

..."Pipes, fiddles, gleemen,  
bones-players and bag-pipers,  
a crowd hideous, noisy, profane,  
shriekers and shouters...

...Tales of death and slaughter, strains of music;  
exact synchronising of the goodly race..."

Source: Ibid., p. 21.

Location of Music: Carmun Fair

Audience: all those attending the fair

Performers: Pipers, fiddlers, gleemen, bones-players, singers/poets

Instruments: Voices, pipes, fiddles, bones, bagpipes

Char.'s of Music:

12.1: "Noisy, profane, hideous"--loud, bawdy, energetic-type  
music is clearly implied at this fair

Effects of Music:

12.a: none specifically stated.

[Number 13]

Title: "Carmun"

Manuscript: LL

Approximate Dating: 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text:

"Is iat a ada olla  
Stuic, cruitti, cuirn chróes-tholla,  
cúisig, timpaig cen tríamna,  
filid, ocus fáen-chlíara."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III,  
Dublin, 1913, p. 18.

Notes by E. Gwynn: Re: the term "cuisig. I have no other instance  
of cuissech, 'piper': cuissech, acc. cuisig  
means 'piping'. timpaig seems to be an ab-  
breviated form of timpanaig." [p.477]

[13]: Translation:

"These are the Fair's great privileges:  
trumpets, fiddles, hollow-throated horns,  
pipers, timpanists unwearied,  
poets and meek musicians."

Source: Ibid., p. 19.

Location of Music: Carmun

Audience: attendees at the Carmun fair

Performers: various musicians

Instruments: trumpets, fiddles, horns, pipes, timpani.

Char.'s of Music:

13.1: Music seen as an integral part of the Carmun fair

Effects of Music:

13.a: Music viewed as a "great privilege" at the fair

[Number 14]

Title: "Ceis Choraind"

Manuscripts: Rennes MS; Book of Ballymote, LL and Stowe III.1.

Approximate Dating: LL: 12th c.; others: 15th c. manuscripts

Old Ir. Text: "Sunda robói Corand cáin  
ac seinm chruitte, ba deg-máin  
ac Diancécht na soball slán  
ba hollam Corand cness-bán.

Tucsat Túath Dé, digraiss deilm,  
ferand díles ar deg-seinm  
do Chorand na céol cnesta,  
ar a eól is ard-mesta."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III, Dublin, 1913, p. 438.

[14]: Translation:

"Here abode gentle Corand  
playing on the harp--it was good riches;  
Corand white of skin was a poet  
in the service of Diancecht, giver of sound limbs.

The Tuatha De (excellent name) bestowed  
land in fee, for his goodly music,  
on Corand of the soothing strains:  
for his knowledge he deserves high esteem..."

Source: Ibid., p. 439.

Location of Music: Ceis Coraind

Audience: none specific

Performer: Corand

Instrument: harp

Char.'s of Music:

14.1: musician Corand blessed by the Tuatha De; implication  
is that Corand was either "abducted" or "hired" to  
play for the sidhe folk

14.2: Corand the harper is also described as a poet

14.3: music described as having "soothing" qualities

Effects of Music:

14.a: The Tuatha De gave him land in exchange for his great  
music he played for them



[Number 15]

Title: "Cend Febrat"

Manuscripts: Book of Lecan; Stowe III.1.; and Rennes MS.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscripts

Old Ir. Text: "Mar rochotlas, cóem in mod,  
and fofúaras m'airfiteod:  
tarfas dam co fír i fat  
cach síd fail i Cind Febrat."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III,  
Dublin, 1913, p. 226.

[15]: Translation:

"As I slept (pleasant the manner)  
therein I met with the theme of my song:  
there was shown me truly and in full  
every fairy mound that is at Cend Febrat..."

Source: Ibid., p. 227.

Location of Music: Cend Febrat

Audience: one man

Performer: he has a musical dream on a mountain, (Cend Febrat),  
where a "song" is revealed to him

Instrument: a dream; is from the Otherworld dimension

Char.'s of Music:

15.1: sidhe music revealed to a man on a mountain; he is  
given his own special "song" and shown sidhe mounds  
and the graves of heroes via Second Sight.

15.2: connection between sleeping and the music being revealed  
to him while asleep on a mountain.

Effects of Music:

15.a: Dream-song reveals the sidhe mounds on Cend Febrat, and the  
graves of heroes to the man via Second Sight

15.b: the man is joyful upon awakening at being given his own  
special "song"

[Number 16]

Title: "Crotta Cliach"

Manuscripts: Rennes MS. and the Book of Ballymote

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscripts

Old Ir. Text: "Sunda sefain fer síde  
Clíach na cruite céol-míne:  
fuair gráin fri gorm-greis ngrinde  
ic dáil chomdeis Chonchinde.

Robóí bliadain, buidnib tor,  
cen choemna ocus cen chotlad,  
feib sennad slóg na síde,  
nothendad brón ban-bríge...

Airm i tathaim ar thimme  
Clíach, rochachain céol-binde;  
and rolúath-gab cen lumma  
draic úathmar fili sunna."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III,  
Dublin, 1913, p. 224.

[16]: Translation:

"Here a man of the fairies made music,  
Cliach of the harp sweet sounding,  
he met a horror, amid the charm of his noble chant,  
at his timely tryst with Conchend.

He was a year, among throngs of chiefs,  
without food and without sleep:  
while the Fairy host was making music,  
the grief of woman's might was urging him...

At the spot where he died of terror,  
Cliach sang sweet melody;  
there seized him there suddenly, not unprotected,  
the loathly dragon that dwells in this place.."

Source: Ibid., p. 225.

Location: Crotta Cliach

Audience: Cliach, the harper, alone

Performer: Cliach, the harper

Instrument: harp and vocal

Char.'s of Music:

16.1: sidhe music by Cliach, a fairy harper

16.2: sweet-sounding music

Effects of Music:

16.a: his charming music failed to protect him from a dragon  
who killed him; perhaps the music "lured" the dragon.(?)

[Number 17]

Title: "Dun Crimthaínd"

Manuscripts: Rennes MS.; Book of Ballymote; Stowe B III.1.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscripts

Old Ir. Text: "Tucus dá choin Canann ciúil,  
nirb obair liúin rodusclái;  
fíu cét lánamna tar ler  
in tslabrad gel ardušmbái."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III,  
Dublin, 1913, p. 122.

[17]: Translation: [a report of visiting an undersea world:]

"I brought the two hounds of Canu the musical;  
it was no idle man's work that broke them;  
worth a hundred couples over sea  
was the white chain that was on them."

Source: Ibid., p. 123.

Location of Music: two hounds, connected by a white chain,  
brought back from the Land under the Waves

Audience: Speaker in the first person, uses "I", but gives no name

Performer: "Canu the musical"

Instrument: none specific

Char.'s of Music:

17.1: this undersea Otherworld is musical in some way, as the  
hounds are brought back from Canu the musical,  
from the Land Under The Waves

Effects of Music:

17.a: none specifically mentioned; however, the narrator  
seems to feel that the two hounds from Canu the  
musical are valuable, and worth bringing back to  
our mortal world.

[Number 18]

Title: "Ess Ruaid I"

Manuscript: LL

Approximate Dating: 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "Andsin doro chair na súan eter srothaib na sáeb-chúan: luid im-muduch fo méla fora curuch cóem-chréda. Ní roacht coa lennán ind laith ingen na ngel-lám glé-maith: luid dar bord cen bríg mbluga fri dord síd na sam-guba."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part IV, Dublin, 1924, p.4.

[18]: Translation:

"...she fell asleep among the streams of the eddying bays; she perished lamentably in her boat of fair bronze. The maiden with the white hands, bright and gold, never reached the hero her lover: she leapt overboard, not mastered by a spell, but at the doleful music from the fairy mounds!"

Source: Ibid., p. 5.

Location of Music: Ess Ruaid

Audience: no one specific; is a commentary

Performer: music from sidhe mounds

Instrument: not mentioned specifically

Char.'s of Music:

18.1: music from sidhe mounds; is a supernatural source

18.2: "doleful", of being more powerful than a spell

Effects of Music:

18.a: sidhe maiden in bronze boat fell asleep to music first;

18.b: then, she leapt overboard and drowned at the doleful music.

[Number 21]

Title: "White Lake of Cera"  
"The White Lake of Carra"

Manuscript: Rennes MS., Book of Ballymote

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "Rofóid Dia dia dídnad de  
énlaith fír-glan anglide:  
forsin loch léir cen lacad,  
nochantis cléir cain-abbad."

Source: Gwynn, Ed, Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III,  
Dublin, 1913, p. 378.

[19] Translation:

"God sent to comfort him at that season,  
a flock of birds, angelic, purely bright,  
over the clear loch unremittingly, they  
sang a chorus, a gentle proclamation:

Source: Ibid., p. 379.

Location: White Lake of Carra

Audience: St. Patrick

Performers: a flock of white birds sent from God

Instrument: voice(s) of the singing angelic birds

Char.'s of Music:

19.1: bright, angelic flock of birds sent from God (i.e., the  
Christian Heaven, an Otherworld dimension)

19.2: gentle; as they sang "a chorus, a gentle proclamation"  
to comfort St. Patrick

Effects of Music:

19.a: these angelic birds comforted St. Patrick in a time of  
distress in his ministry

[Number 21]

Title: "Loch Garman"

Manuscripts: From various fragments: Rennes MS.; Book of Ballymote;  
Book of Ui Maine; Book of Lecan; and Stowe III.1.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscripts

Old Ir. Text: "Bile óir sin chnucc cen chath,  
riccad a barr nem nélach;  
airfitiud fer ndomain de  
atchloss do baurr in bile."

Source; Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III,  
Dublin, 1913, p. 176.

[21]: Translation:

[Cathair, son of Fedilmid, king of Erin from Alenn, has a dream:]

"A tree of gold on the hill free from battle,  
its crown reached the cloudy welkin;  
thence the music of the men of the world  
was heard from the tree's crown."

Source: Ibid., p. 177.

Location of Music: from the crown of a tree in a dream

Audience: the dreamer: here, Cathair, the son of the king of Erin

Performer: Mysterious and unknown, as from the crown of a tree,  
the music of the men of the world is heard

Instrument: Not specific; perhaps the crown of the tree

Char.'s of Music:

- 21.1: seems to imply a type of universal, "cosmic" music,  
as it is called the "music of the men of the world"
- 21.2: supernatural; music heard from the crown of a tree
- 21.3: peaceful--as music heard from the crown of the tree is  
"free from battle"; music from crown of tree later  
interpreted by druid as being related to the kingship  
of Ireland

Effects of Music:

21.a: none specific

[Number 22]

Title: Loch Garman

Manuscripts: From fragments in: Rennes MS.; Book of Ballymote; Stowe III.1.; Book of Lecan; and Book of Ui Maine.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscripts

Old Ir. Text: "Is é in bile óir ainbthech  
gécach, lethan, lán-toirthech,  
tussu it ríg for Banba bind  
is for cach adba in hErind."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III,  
Dublin, 1913, p. 182.

[22]: Translation:

[Cathair, son of Fedilmid, king of Erin from Alenn, has a dream and asks the king's druid to interpret it for him:]

"`This is the storm-tossed tree of gold,  
branching wide, full of fruit--  
thyself in thy kingship over tuneful Banba,  
and over every dwelling in Erin.'"

Source: Ibid., p. 183.

Location of Music: in a dream--an Otherworld dimension

Audience: the dreamer, Cathair, the son of the king

Performer: land of Ireland (Banba) as being "tuneful"

Instrument: none specifically mentioned

Char.'s of Music:

22.1: Music found in Otherworld/dream dimension

22.2: Music related to kingship of Ireland; music seen as a type of "blessing" for the reign of a king--i.e., it symbolizes a good and prosperous reign, over every dwelling in Erin.

Effects of Music:

22.a: Druid later interprets the tree of gold as a symbol of a king reigning in peace and prosperity in a "tuneful" land; i.e., a harmonious reign.

[Number 23]

Title: "Loch Garman"

Manuscripts: From fragments in: Rennes MS.; Book of Ballymote;  
Book of Ui Maine; Stowe III.1.; and Book of Lecan.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscripts

Old Ir. Text:

"sé in t-airfitiud co n-úail  
robái i mbaurr in bile búain,  
th'aurlabra fíal, óebdu de,  
ic sídugad sochaide."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III,  
Dublin, 1913, p. 182.

[23]: Translation:

[Cathair, son of Fedilmid, king of Erin from Alenn, has a dream,  
and asks the king's druid to interpret it for him:]

"`This is the stately music  
that was in the crown of the enduring tree--  
thy noble eloquence, lovelier thereby,  
when appeasing a multitude."

Source: Ibid., p. 183.

Location of Music: crown of a tree in a dream

Audience: Cathair, the king's son, dreams

Performer: crown of a tree in the Otherworld

Instrument: unknown--is rather `mysterious'

Char.'s of Music:

23.1: music from the crown of a tree in the Otherworld

23.2: stately music

Effects of Music:

23.a: music symbol of king's eloquence in governing "a multitude"



[Number 24]

Title: "Mag Corainn"

Manuscript: LL

Approximate Dating: 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "Magh Coraind, cidh diatá? Ní ansa. Corann cruitire do Dhían Cécht mac in Dagdha, rogairm-sidhe asa chruit Caelchés do mucuib Dreibrinne..."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas Part IV, Dublin, 1923, p. 292.

[24]: Translation:

"Mag Corainn, whence the name? Not hard to say. Corann, harper to Dian Cecht the Dagda's son, called with his harp Caelcheis, one of Drebriu's swine..."

Source: Ibid., p. 293.

Location of Music: none specific

Audience: the magical, enchanted pig called Caelcheis

Performer: Corann, a harper

Instrument: harp

Char.'s of Music:

none specific.

Effects of Music:

24.a: Corann's harp music is seen as a type of spell to "summon" a magic pig from a distance; concept of an animal possibly being "lured" by the music to the site of the musician.

[Number 25]

Title: "Mag Mucrime"

Manuscripts: Book of Lecan, Rennes MS., Book of Ballymote

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscripts

Old Ir. Text:

..."A huaim Chruachan, roclechta, tanic dub-thret druidechta...  
...Rochoillset torad is tlacht i cóiciud chlárach Connacht..."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III,  
Dublin, 1913, p. 382.

[25]: Translation: [In ref. to a herd of magical swine]:

..."From the cave of Cruachu, where they were used to dwell,  
came a black herd of magical nature..."

...They ravaged fruit and sheen in the tuneful province  
of Connacht..."

Source: Ibid., p. 383.

Location of Music: province of Connacht portrayed as musical

Audience: none specific

Performers: citizens of Connacht

Instruments: their voices/instruments in making Connacht  
a "tuneful" place

Char.'s of Music:

25.1: "tuneful" province of Connacht

Effects of Music:

25.a: music symbolizes a land of peace and harmony and/or a  
land full of music

[Number 26]

Title: "Mag Luirg"

Manuscripts: Book of Lecan; Book of Ballymote; Stowe III.1.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscripts

Old Ir. Text: "Is don gním-sin ic Cúain Chairn  
fofúair in mag a mór-ainm:  
gaire Conaill na cét ceól  
dam cen dodaing is dag-éol."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III,  
Dublin, 1913, p. 398.

[26]: Translation:

"From this deed at Cuan Cairn  
the plain received its great name:  
the Cherishing of Conall, hero of a hundred songs,  
is well known to me without obscurity..."

Source: Ibid., p. 399.

Location of Music: reference to a hero being "of a hundred songs"

Audience: none specific

Performer: none specific

Instrument: none specific

Char.'s of Music:

26.1: hero of early Ireland, Conall, described as being of  
,"a hundred songs"; concept of music representing  
the victories and strength of a hero.

Effects of Music: none specically named.

Note: the reference to a hero as somehow "musical" is also  
commending his bravery and honoring him--music as denoting  
status, as there were songs about him or by him after  
his death.

[Number 27]

Title: "Port Lairge"

Manuscripts: Book of Ballymote; Stowe III.1.; Rennes MS

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscripts

Old Ir. Text: "Cocúala in fagur andsin,  
 ropo magur co mór-nim,  
 muirn na mur- duchand mara  
 ós na tonnaib tóeb-glana...  
 Tuilfitis slóig in betha  
 ria nglóir is ria nglan-gretha..."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III,  
 Dublin, 1913, p. 190.

Notes by E. Gwynn: mara is translated as mermaid; whereas earlier  
 in the text the term suire is translated as  
 "sea-nymphs", also meaning mermaid.

[27]: Translation:

"And there he heard the sound,  
 it was a lure of baleful might,  
 the chant of the mermaids of the sea  
 over the pure-sided waves...  
 The hosts of the world would fall asleep  
 listening to their voice and their clear notes..."

Source: Ibid., p. 191.

Location of Music: underwater Otherworld dimension

Audience: man in a boat out at sea

Performer: mermaids of the sea

Instrument: their chants/singing

Char.'s of Music:

27.1: underwater Otherworld music

27.2: "a lure of baleful might"--mermaids' chants

Effects of Music;

27.a: reference to the "hosts of the world" falling  
 asleep to this music of mermaids, as it was so  
 powerfully alluring.

[Number 28]

Title: "Snam Da En"

Manuscript: Stowe D.II.2.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "Bruidhe mac Derg a Cruachan Duibthire...  
Nothathaighedh iarom Buidhi ocus a chomalta .i. Luán mac Lughair  
meic Luigheach ir-richt dá én co hEstin ocus nochantais céol  
sirrechtach don tśluagh, conosciuredh a suán. In tan iarom ba  
codludh dóibh notheightis...Andsin dochantais don tśluag ceol seíg  
sirechtach sir-búan co cotlad in slúag uile risin ceol na síd-  
chuire."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part IV,  
Dublin, 1924, p. 350-2.

[28]: Translation: "Bruide son of Derg from Cruachan Dubthire...  
and his foster-brother Luan son of Lugair son of Lugaid, used to  
visit Estiu in the shape of two birds, and sing a plaintive song to  
the host till it put them to sleep...Then they chanted to the host  
a song, shrill, wistful, unceasing, till all the host fell asleep  
at the song of the fairy folk."

Source: Ibid., p. 351-3.

Location of Music: from two sidhe foster-brothers who change  
into two sidhe birds and visit Estiu

Audience: the host

Performer: two sidhe birds

Instrument: their voices

Char.'s of Music:

28.1: sidhe birds' music from Otherworld

28.2: described as "shrill", "wistful", "unceasing" sidhe music

Effects of Music:

28.a: their song put the host to sleep--an entire group.

Title: "Sinann I" [Legend of the Shannon river, tracing its origin to a Well in the Land of Promise]

Manuscript: From fragments: Stowe D.II.2; Book of Ballymote; Book of Ui Maine; and Book of Lacan.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscripts

Old Ir. Text: "Immas na Segsa so dait  
co febsa fond fír-thiprait:  
ós topur na tond tréorach  
fail coll n-écsi n-ilcheólach...

Tecait co húais, ra gním nglé,  
secht srotha, búais cen búaidre,  
dorís isin topur the  
dianid cocur ceól-éicse...

Rotheich in topur, toirm nglé,  
tria chocur na ceól-éicse,  
re Sinann..."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part III,  
Dublin, 1913, p. 290.

[29]: Translation:

[fairy maiden Sinann goes to gaze at the underwater well of Conla:]

"Here thou findest the magic lore of Segais  
with excellence, under the true spring:  
over the well of the mighty waters  
stands the poets' music-haunted hazel...

Nobly they come, with bright activity,  
seven streams, in an untroubled gush,  
back into the well yonder,  
whence rises a murmur of musical lore...

The well fled back (clear fame through the  
murmur of its musical lore!)  
before Sinann..."

Source; Ibid., p. 289.

Location of Music: Otherworld--the underwater well of Connla

Audience: sidhe maiden Sinann

Performer: seven streams of the underwater well of Connla

Instrument: their "murmur" of musical lore

Char.'s of Music:

29.1: underwater well as musical: undersea Otherworld

29.2: poets' hazel tree described as "music haunted"

29.3: seven streams of well of Connla as having "musical lore"

Effects of Music: none specifically named.

[Number 30]

Title: "Taltiu"

Manuscripts: LL and Trinity College H.3.3.

Approximate Dating of Manuscripts: LL: 12th c.; H.3.3.: 15th c.

Old Ir. Text: "...Dorairngert fáitsine fír,  
Taltiu tóeb-gel ina tír,  
airet nosfaímad cech flaith  
ná biad hÉrui cen óg-naith.

Óenach co n-ór, co n-argut,  
co cluichib, co ceól charput,  
co cumtach cuirp is anma  
iar n-eólus iar n-erlabra."

Source: Gwynn, E., Metrical Dindshenchas, Part IV,  
Dublin, 1923, p. 150.

[30]: Translation:

"White-sided Taltiu uttered  
in her land a true prophecy,  
that so long as every prince should accept her,  
Erin should not be without perfect song.

A fair with gold, with silver,  
with games, with music of chariots,  
with adornment of body and soul  
by means of knowledge and eloquence."

Source: Ibid., p. 151.

Location of Music: Taltiu fair

Audience: people of Ireland and of the fair of Taltiu

Performer: chariots and the Taltiu fair, held at Lugnasadh

Instrument: chariot wheels (?)

Char.'s of Music:

- 30.1: "perfect song" of Ireland, as part of a prosperous reign
- 30.2: Taltiu's fair as being filled with the music of chariots,  
adding to the overall festive atmosphere

Effects of Music:

- 30.a: as long as every prince should accept Taltiu, then Erin  
would not be left without a "perfect song"; i.e., the  
effect being that good times remain for the kingdom,  
and the role of the Taltiu fair in keeping it that way.

[Number 31]

Name of Tale: "Cath Findchorad"  
"The Battle of Finchorad"

Manuscript: Royal Irish Academy MS. B-IV 1a, p. 17-29.  
Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "(...ead airdh-beana fair go rab binnithir teda meandchrot i llamhaib suadhga sírseinm a...céol sirreachtach sirbhinn sith amhail concananadh an camorán ingantach go cclodh catha go ndit.)"

Source: Dobbs, M., "The Battle of Findchorad", ZCP 14, London, 1923, p. 400.

[31]: Translation:

[Here, music is mentioned as part of an unfortunately incomplete manuscript fragment, where there is a gap, but it is interesting regarding the perception of music.]

"...(which were as sweet as lute-strings in the hands of players ever singing their bewitching luscious peace-music, like as the wondrous fool [who] sang harmoniously to overthrow the battle at the end.)"

Source: Ibid., p. 401.

Location of Music: near a battlefield  
Audience: not sure, as this seems to be an allegory  
Performer: Singers, portrayed as also playing the lute  
Instrument: Vocal and instrumental: the lute (chrot)

Char.'s of Music:

- 31.1: sweetness of lute-strings
- 31.2: singing as "bewitching"
- 31.3 singing as "...luscious peace-music"
- 31.4: a fool's singing as "harmonious"

Effects of Music:

- 31.a: Music as having power to bring peace
- 31.b: Fool's singing as having power to stop the battle
- 31.c: Music as having the power to put one into a trance, by "bewitching" the listener with sweet music. (implied)



Name of Tale: "Cath Ruis na Rig for Boinn"  
"Battle of Ross Na Rig on the Boyne"

Manuscripts: LL: fo. 171, and Stowe MS. E. IV 3

Approximate Dating: LL: 12th c.; Stowe E.IV.3: 15th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Is and-sin selais Conall in claideb aith-ger iar-lebur ass a intig bodba, 7 dobert cocetul a chlaidib bar na sluagaib. Atchloss rucht claidib Conaill dar na cathaib cechtarda ra halt na huaire sin. Cid tra acht feib ra-chualatar cocetul claidib Conaill, ra-chudaigetar a crideda..."

[later, in text:]

"Tanic fo na sluagaib 7 dobert cocetal a chlaidib forru, co torchratar deich cet fer n-armach leis."

Source: Hogan, E., "Cath Ruis na Rig for Boinn", Royal Irish Academy, Todd Lecture Series, Vol. IV, Dublin, 1892, p. 44-46, 48.

[32]: Translation:

"It is then that Conall drew the sharp long sword out of its sheath of war, and played the music of his sword on the armies. The ring of Conall's sword was heard throughout the battalions on both sides, at that moment of time. However, as soon as they heard the music of Conall's sword, their hearts quaked..." [later]:

"He [Conall] came along the armies and played the music of his sword on them, till ten hundred armed men fell by him."

Source: Ibid., p. 47, 49.

Location of Music: a battlefield

Audience: the warriors

Performer: Conall, a hero

Instrument: sword

Char.'s of Music:

32.1: "ringing" of a sword in battle

Effects of Music:

32.a: its sound instills fear into other warriors

32.b: the music of this sword seen as especially powerful in battle, enabling Conall to have extraordinary success.

[Number 33]

Name of Tale: "Comracc Con Culainn re Senbecc"  
"Combat of Cuchulainn with Senbecc"

Manuscript: Stowe 992, fo. 50b [15th c.]

Approximate Dating: tale known by 10th c.

Old Ir. Text: "...`Cé raed sut acut?' ar Cúchulaind. `Timpan becc,' ar Senbecc, `7 in sepainfidhtir duit-si he?' `Maith lium,' ar Cúchulaind. Atnaigh-sium a mher tharse co m-boi Cúchlaind oc sirchuí lásaín n-golltraighes. Rot sephain dono gentraighes co m-boi Cúchulaind oc sirgaire. Ro seinn suantraighes co m-boi Cúchulaind on trath co ceile ina suan 7 i sircodlad. Luidh Senbecc dia thigh..."

Source: Meyer, K., "Combat of Cuchulaind with Senbecc,"  
RC 6, Paris, 1884, p. 183.

[33]: Translation:

[Cuchulainn, while on the bank of the Boyne performing the feat of the nine heroes, and killing salmon, sees a wee man in a 'purple dress, and a small boat of bronze under him'...]

"...`What little thing is that with thee?' asked Cuchulaind. `A small harp,' said Senbecc, `and shall I play it to thee?' `I am pleased,' said Cuchulaind. Then he ran his fingers over it, in such wise that Cuchulaind kept shedding tears at the melancholy tune. Then he played the merry tune, and Cuchulaind kept laughing continually. He played the sleepy tune, and Cuchulaind was in sleep and continuous slumber from one hour to the other..."

Source: Ibid., p. 184.

Location of Music: river Boyne

Audience: Cuchulainn

Performer: a wee man, Senbecc, in a bronze boat

Instrument: a 'wee harp' (timpan); elfin in size

Char.'s of Music:

33.1: melancholy tune (golltraighes)

33.2: merry tune (gentraighes)

33.3: sleepy tune (suantraighes)

33.4: the three strains come from a wee timpan

Effects of Music:

33.a: Cuchulainn "sheds tears"

33.b: he was "laughing continually"

33.c: he was "in sleep and continuous slumber"

Name of Tale: "Fled Bricrend"  
"The Feast of Bricriu"

Manuscript: LU 99b1-112b48

Approximate Dating: late 11th c.-early 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: ..."Cipé aird do airdib in domain tra i m-beth Cúruí, dochanad [bricht] for a chatraig cach n-aidchi, co m-bo déinithir bróin mulind, conna fogbaithe addorus do grés iar fuinud n-grene..."

Source: Henderson, George, Fled Bricrend, Irish Texts Society, Vol. II, London, 1899, p. 102.

[34A] Translation:

"In whatever quarter of the globe Cu Roi should happen to be, every night be chanted a spell over his stronghold, so that the fort revolved as swiftly as a millstone. The entrance was never to be found after sunset."

Source: Cross, T., and Slover, C., Ancient Irish Tales, Dublin, 1969, p. 273.

[34B]: Translation:

"Whatever part of the world Cu Roi might be in, he sang a spell over his stronghold each night; it would then revolve as swiftly as a mill wheel turns, so that its entrance was never found after sunset."

Source: Gantz, J., Early Irish Myths and Sagas, London, 1981, p. 247.

Location of Music: any quarter of the world; from a distance

Audience: None specifically mentioned.

Performer: Cu Roi, a Munster nobleman

Instrument: Vocal

Char.'s of Music:

34.1: a "spell" is sung/chanted to protect a home (as distinct from a mere "song" or "melodic" type of singing)

34.2: this is done from a distance, and is effective

Effects of Music:

34.a: Protection: as the entrance to the home "revolves" swiftly, to keep out unwanted intruders

[Number 35]

Name of Tale: "Longes mac nUislenn"  
"Exile of the Sons of Uisliu"

Manuscript: Reconstituted text, mainly from LL 192b11-193b24  
and YBL 749-53.

Approximate Dating of Manuscripts: LL: 12th c.; YBL: 15th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Fecht n-and didiu bai-seom int-i Noisi a oenur for  
doe inna rratha .i. ina Emna, oc andord. Ba bind immurgu a  
n-andord mac n-Usnig. Cech bo ocus cech mil ro-chluined, no-  
mbligtis da trian blechta d'immarcraid uadib. Cech duine rod-  
chluined, ba lor sithchaire ocus airfitiud doib."

Source: Hull, V., Longes mac nUislenn, The Modern Language  
Association of America, New York, 1949, p. 45.

[35]: Translation:

"On one occasion, then, the aforementioned Noisiu was alone on the  
rampart of the earthwork (that is, of Emain) singing in a tenor (?)  
voice. Melodious, however, was the tenor (?) singing of the Sons  
of Uisliu. Each cow and each animal that heard [it], two thirds  
surplus milk always was milked from them. Each person who heard it  
always had a sufficient peaceful disposition (?) and musical  
entertainment..."

Source: Ibid., p. 63.

Location of Music: Rampart of Emuin Machae

Audience: cows and men

Performer: Noisiu

Instrument: Vocal/singing

Char.'s of Music:

35.1: "melodious", a quality of sweetness is implied

Effects of Music:

35.a: Greater productivity, as cows gave two thirds more milk

35.b: Caused men to be much more peaceful--music as good for the  
community, as it helps avoid potential conflicts

35.c: Here, only one man's singing seems to have a powerful effect  
on a great number of men, and also animals. (Noisiu  
is famous for his legendary singing skills in early  
Irish literature.)

[Number 36]

Name of Tale: "Longes mac nUislenn"  
"Exile of the Sons of Uisliu"

Manuscript: Reconstituted Text; from LL 192b11-193b24 and  
YBL 749-53

Approximate Dating of Manuscripts: LL: 12th c.; YBL: 15th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Cid bindí lib in cach mí  
Cuslinnaig is cornairi,  
Is sí mo chobais in-diu:  
Ro-cúala céol bad bindiu.

Bind la Conchobar for rí  
Cuslennaig is cornairi;  
Ba bindiu lem-sa-cloth n-ell-  
Sían no-gebtís maic Uislenn.

Fogur tuinne toirm Noísi;  
Ba céol bind a bith-chlóisi...."

Source: Hull, V., Longes mac nUislenn, Modern Language  
Association of America, New York, 1949, p. 66-67.

[36A]: Translation:

[Dierdre stayed with Conchobar for a year after the death of her  
beloved Noisiu; she was very unhappy and said to the musicians:]

"Though melodious you deem at all times  
Pipers and hornblowers,  
This is my confession today:  
I have heard music that was more melodious.

Melodious used to deem Conchobar, your king,  
Pipers and hornblowers;  
More melodious I used to deem--fame of hosts (?)--  
The strain which the Sons of Uisliu used to sing.

Noisiu's voice [was like] the sound of a wave;  
To hear him always was [like] melodious music..."

Source: Ibid.

[36B]: Translation:

"Melodious always to you  
 your pipers and trumpeters  
 yet today I tell you  
 I have heard music that was sweeter.

Melodious to Conchubur, your king,  
 his pipers and trumpeters;  
 sweeter to me--fame of hosts--  
 the singing of the sons of Uisliu.

A wave the sound of Noisiu's voice--  
 his singing was always sweet..."

Source: Gantz, J., Early Irish Myths and Sagas, London,  
 1981, p. 264.

Location of Music: Conchobar's residence

Audience: Dierdre

Performer: the kings' hornblowers and pipers; also the singing  
 of the sons of Uisliu (Noisiu)

Instruments: horns (or trumpets), [cornairi] voices and pipes  
 [cuslinnaig]

Char.'s of Music:

36.1: sweet, melodious singing of Noisiu

36.2: "like a wave", was the singing of Noisiu (a metaphor)

Effects of Music:

36.a: brought great happiness and joy to Dierdre

36.b: memory of great music, in a process of mourning the loss  
 of a loved one

36.c: the contrast of the "sweetness" of Noisiu's singing, with  
 the horns and trumpets' music, which Dierdre does not  
 acknowledge as having the same effects on her.

[Number 37]

Name of Tale: "Mesca Ulad"  
"The Intoxication of the Ulstermen"

Manuscript: LL 261b25-268b49 and LU 19a1-20b31

Approximate Dating: LL: 12th c.; LU: late 11th-early 12th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Oenfher eturru, suasmael dubrintach fair;  
mocolshuli mora oengela ina chind; aged ethiopacda slemangorm aci.  
Bratt ribain i forcipul immi; frithchuman umaiddi ina brutt uasa  
braini; sithbacc creduma ina laim. Clucin ceolbind ina  
chomaitechta."

Source: Watson, J.C., Mesca Ulad, D.I.A.S., Dublin,  
1941, p. 30-31.

[37]: Translation:

"One man is among them, with a close-shorn bristly poll; great eyes  
in his head, all white and bulging; he has a smooth blue Ethiopian  
face. A cloak of striped cloth (?) is gathered about him; a  
hook (?) of brass is in his cloak above his front; a long crook of  
bronze is in his hand. He has with him a sweet-sounding little  
bell..."

Source: Watson, J.C., "Mesca Ulad", SGS V, Oxford,  
1942, p.22.

Location of Music: a warrior's uniform

Audience: Cromm Deroil

Performer: None specifically mentioned.

Instrument: a bell on his uniform

Char.'s of Music:

37.1: "sweet-sounding little bell" as part of a foreign warrior's  
appearance

Effects of Music: None specifically mentioned

Name of Tale: "Serglige Con Culainn"  
"Wasting Sickness of Cuchulainn"

Manuscript: LU, and Trinity College Dublin  
manuscript H.4.22

Approximate Dating: LU: late 11th-early 12th c.  
H.4.22: 17th c.

Old Ir. Text: "...`Día tísat éoin Mag Murthemni nó Bóind, in dá én ba háildem díb duticfat.' Níbo chían íarom co n-accatar dá én forsind loch 7 rond dercóir etorro. Cansit céol mbec. Torchair cotlud forsín slóg."

Dillon, M., Serglige Con Culainn, D.I.A.S., Dublin,  
1953, p. 2.

[38A]: Translation:

[Cuchulainn says to his wife Eithne:]

"`If birds come to Mag Murthemni or upon the Boyne, the two loveliest of them shall come to thee.' Not long afterwards they saw two birds on the lake with a gold chain between them. They sang a little tune. Sleep fell upon the host..."

Source: Dillon, M., "The Wasting Sickness of Cuchulainn",  
SGS 7, Oxford, 1951, p. 49.

[38B]: Translation:

"...`if in the future any birds come to Mag Muirthemne or to the Boyne, the two birds that are the most beautiful among those that come shall be thine.' A little while after this they saw two birds flying over the lake, linked together by a chain of red gold. They sang a gentle song, and a sleep fell upon all the men who were there..."

Source: Cross, T., and Slover, C., Ancient Irish Tales,  
Dublin, 1969, p. 178.

Location of Music: lake by Mag Muirthemni

Audience: Eithne and Cuchulainn, the other women and Ulstermen

Performer: two sidhe birds connected by a red-gold chain

Instrument: birds' singing

Char.'s of Music:

38.1: "gentle" singing of birds

Effects of Music:

38.a: lulled all present to sleep, except Cuchulainn, who then  
sees a vision and experiences an initiation



Name of Tale: "Serglige Con Culainn"  
"The Wasting Sickness of Cuchulainn"

Manuscript: LU and Trinity College Dublin manuscript H.4.22

Approximate Dating: LU: late 11th-early 12thc.  
H.4.22: 17th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Atchonnarc áes cíuil is tig  
ic aerfitiud dond ingin:  
manbad a lúas tísa ammach,  
domgéntais co hétréorach."

Source: Dillon, M., Serglige Con Culainn, D.I.A.S., Dublin,  
1953, p. 20.

[39A]: Translation:

[Loeg sang to Cuchulainn about the delights of the sidhe mound:]

"I saw musicians within,  
playing for the maiden.  
Were it not that I came out so quickly  
they would have left me without reason."

Source: Dillon, M., "Wasting Sickness of Cu Chulainn",  
SGS 7, Oxford, 1951, p. 66.

[39B]: Translation: (verse version:)

"I saw the folk of song; their strains rang sweetly,  
As for the lady in that house they played  
Had I not fled away from thence, and fleetly,  
Hurt by that music, I had weak been made."

Source: Leahy, A.H., Heroic Romances of Ireland, Vol. I.,  
London, 1905, p. 75.

Location of Music: sidhe mound

Audience: Loeg, Cuchulainn's charioteer

Performer: the sidhe musicians

Instrument: no specific instruments named

Char.'s of Music:

39.1: sweet sidhe music; is compelling to the listener

Effects of Music:

39.a: music described as having ability to "render one helpless",  
"weak", as under a spell--a possible hurtful effect.

39.b: the listener in this instance "fled" as quickly as possible,  
and seems to feel thankful for having "escaped" unharmed.

[Number 40]

Name of Tale: "Serglige Con Culainn"  
"Wasting Sickness of Cuchulainn"

Manuscript: LU and Trinity College Dublin manuscript H.4.22.

Approximate Dating: LU: late 11th-early 12th c.  
H.4.22: 17th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Ní céol síde séol fodgain:  
is fordath fola fil fair:  
crónán canas (uasa) chreit  
focanat roith a charpait."

Source: Dillon, M., ed., Serglige Con Culainn, D.I.A.S.,  
Dublin, 1953, p. 21.

[40A:] Translation:

[Fand sang of Cuchulainn:]

"No fairy music is the strain  
which sounds for him,  
The stain of blood is upon him.  
He chants a drone above the chariot-frame,  
the wheels of his chariot sound in harmony."

Source: Dillon, M., "Wasting Sickness of Cuchulainn",  
SGS 7, Oxford, 1951, p. 67-8.

Location of Music: a chariot

Audience: Fand, describing Cuchulainn's character and chariot

Performer: Cuchulainn "chants a drone" above the chariot; his  
chariot wheels are described as harmonious

Instrument: Singing by Cuchulainn; also, chariot wheels.

Char.'s of Music:

40.1: Two types of music are inferred: a sweeter fairy (sidhe)  
music, and that of a different type--Cuchulainn's  
, warrior blood being inferred as war-like; i.e., his  
cronan chanting seen as inherently "incompatible" with  
sweet sidhe music.

40.2: Inanimate objects (chariot wheels) described as harmonious

Effects of Music:

40.a: Fand seems quite sure that Cuchulainn's warrior "chanting"  
(cronan) is definitely not the same as other music; it is  
felt to have a more menacing or frightening effect.

Name of Tale: "Serglige Con Culainn"  
"Wasting Sickness of Cuchulainn"

Manuscript: LU and Trinity College Dublin manuscript H.4.22

Approximate Dating: LU: late 11th-early 12th c.  
H.4.22: 17th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Atát arin dorus sair  
tri bile do chorcor-glain,  
dia ngair in énlaithe búan bláith  
don macraid assin rígríath."

Source: Dillon, M., ed., Serglige Con Culainn, D.I.A.S.,  
Dublin, 1953, p. 17.

[41A]: Translation:

"Before the entrance to the east,  
three trees of purple glass,  
from which birds sing softly, unceasing,  
to the children from the royal fort."

Source: Dillon, M., "Wasting Sickness of Cuchulainn", SGS 7,  
Oxford, 1951, 64.

[41B]: Translation:

"At the door toward the east  
Are three trees of purple glass.  
From their tops a flock of birds sing a sweetly  
drawn-out song,  
For the children who live in the royal stronghold."

Source: Cross, T., and Slover, C., Ancient Irish Tales,  
Dublin, 1969, p. 189.

Location of Music: Otherworld

Audience: Loeg, Cuchulainn's charioteer

Performer: sidhe birds, atop three trees of purple glass

Instrument: the birds' singing

Char.'s of Music:

41.1: sweet singing of sidhe birds

41.2: soft singing of sidhe birds

41.3: "unceasing" music; it never stops, day or night.

Effects of Music:

41.a: entertains and provides happiness for the royal children

41.b: illustrates the continuing, harmonic resonance of the  
Otherworld and its unceasing music

Name of Tale: "Serglige Con Culainn"  
"Wasting Sickness of Cuchulainn"

Manuscript: LU and Trinity College Dublin manuscript H.4.22

Approximate Dating: LU: late 11th-early 12th c; H.4.22: 17th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Atá crand i ndorus liss,  
ní hétig cocetul friss,  
crand airgit ris tatin grían,  
cosmail fri hór a roníam."

Source: Dillon, M., ed., Serglige Con Culainn, D.I.A.S.,  
Dublin, 1953, p. 17.

[42A]: Translation:  
"There is a tree at the entrance to the enclosure--  
it were well to match its music--  
a silver tree on which the sun shines,  
like gold is its brilliance."

Source: Dillon, M., "Wasting Sickness of Cuchulainn",  
SGS 7, 1951, p. 64.

[42B]: Translation:  
"At the entrance to the enclosure is a tree  
From whose branches there comes beautiful and  
harmonious music.  
It is a tree of silver, which the sun illumines,  
It glistens like gold."

Source: Cross, T., and Slover, C., Ancient Irish Tales,  
Dublin, 1969, p. 189.

Location of Music: A silver tree at entrance to Otherworld

Audience: Loeg, Cuchulainn's charioteer

Performer: a tree

Instrument: its own natural harmony

Char.'s of Music:

- 42.1: this tree has beautiful, harmonious music in and of itself
- 42.2: it is continual, day and night
- 42.3: this silver musical tree glistens and shines like the sun
- 42.4: this tree is located at the entrance to the Otherworld,  
and it is musical in nature. (music as a possible  
"bridge" to the Otherworld)

Effects of Music:

- 42.a: Loeg is very impressed and awed by this musical tree
- 42.b: Loeg then felt as though he had definitely entered  
another reality (Subject of musical tree as a possible  
"gateway" to the Otherworld.)

[Number 43]

Name of Tale: "Tain Bo Cuailnge"  
"The Cattle-Raid of Cuailnge"

Manuscript: (Recension I): LU, YBL, Egerton 1782, O'Curry MS 1

Approximate Dating: LU: late 11th-early 12th c.  
YBL: late 14th c.  
Egerton 1782: early 16th c.  
O'Curry MS 1: late 16th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Is and sin dosnán catár cruitti Caínibili ó Ess Rúaid  
día n-airfithiud. Indar leó ba du thoscélad forru ó Ultaib."

Source: O'Rahilly, C., trans., Tain Bo Cuailnge, Recension I,  
D.I.A.S., Dublin, 1976, p. 30.

[43A]: Translation:

"Then the harpers of Cain Bile came to them from Ess Ruaid to entertain them with music. But they thought that the harpers had come from the Ulstermen to spy on them..."

Source: Ibid., p.151.

[43B]: Translation:

"Then the magical sweet-mouth harpers of Cain Bile came out from the red cataract at Ess Ruaid to charm the host. But the people thought that these were spies from Ulster..."

Source: Kinsella, T., The Tain, Oxford, 1969, p. 97.

Location of Music: from Ess Ruaid  
Audience: the host  
Performer: harpers from Cain Bile  
Instrument: harp

Char.'s of Music:

43.1: "magical, sweet" harp music

43.2: music as having ability to "charm" the listener(s)

Effects of Music:

43.a: fear that the "charming" harpists were really spies--  
concept of musicians being used as a possible deceptive  
maneuver by the Ulstermen.

[Number 44]

Name of Tale: "Tain Bo Fraich"  
"The Cattle Raid of Fraich"

Manuscript: LL 183v-185v=facs. p. 248a11-252b5

Approximate Dating: 12th c. manuscript; tale about 8th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Sennait dóib íarum conid apthatar dá fér déc dia muntir la coí 7 torsi. Ba cáin 7 ba bind in triar sa 7 batar cáini Úaithni insein. Is hé in triar irdaircc: tri derbráthir .i. Goltraiges 7 Gentraiges 7 Suantraiges. Boind a ssídib a mmáthair a triur. Is din chéol sephainn Úaithne cruitt in Dagdaí ainmnighther a triu. In tan bóe in ben oc lámnad ba gol mairgg lee la gúri na n-indan i tossuch. Ba gen 7 fáilte arabeiti ar medón ar imtholtain in dá mac. Ba súan álgine arabeitte in mac dédenach ar thrumme inna bithhe, conid de ro ainmniged trian in chiuil. Dofíussig íarum assint súan in Boind. 'Aurfoímsiu,' ol si, 'do thri maccu, a Úaithni lánbrotha, fo bíth file súantride 7 gentride 7 goltride ar búuib sceo mnáib dosoifet la Meidb 7 Ailill. Atbélat fir la clúaiss ngléssa dóib.' Anait dint senmair íar sain issind ríghthaig."

Source: Meid, W., ed., Tain Bo Fraich, D.I.A.S., Dublin, 1967, p. 4-5.

[44] Translation:

"They played to them, then, so that twelve men of their household died of weeping and sadness. Fair and melodious were these three, and they were Uaithne's fair ones. The famous three were brothers. Goltraiges, Gentraiges, and Suantraiges. Boand of the fairies was their mother. It is from the music played by Uaithne, the Dagda's harper, that the three are named. When the woman was in travail it seemed to be like weeping and sorrow at first with the sharpness of the pangs; then, in the middle, it was laughter and gladness that he played on account of her elation because of the two sons; it was sleep and gentleness for the last son on account of the heaviness of the birth, so that from it a third of the music was named. Boand then awoke from the sleep. 'Accept,' she said, 'your three sons, O passionate Uaithne, for there are Suantraide, Gentraide, and Goltraide for cattle and for women who shall bring forth under Meidb and Ailill. Men will die on hearing the music.' They ceased playing then in the royal house."

Source: Byrne, M., and Dillon, M., "Tain Bo Fraich", EC 2, Paris, 1937, p. 4-5.

Location of Music: King Ailill and Queen Medb's courtyard in Connacht

Audience: Ailill and Medb, and the Connachtmen, and Froech's men

Performer: three sons of Uaithne, the Dagda's harper (they are of sidhe blood)

Instrument: harps (cruitt)

Char.'s of Music:

44.1: Three sons played the 'sad strain' (golltraiges)

44.2: Three sons described as "fair and melodious" harpers

44.3: The birth of the three sons compared to the three strains of music: sad, merry, and 'quiet and peaceful' (golltraiges, gentraiges, suantraiges)

44.4: They had special musical power as they were of sidhe blood-- the sons of Uaithne, the Dagda's harper, and Boand.

Effects of Music:

44.a: The music played by the three sons of Uaithne caused twelve men to die of weeping and sadness

44.b: Comparison: sharpness of labor pains compared to golltraiges, "weeping and sadness"

44.c: Comparison: the joy of giving birth to the first two sons compared to gentraiges, "laughter and gladness"

44.d: Comparison: the heaviness of the birth of the last son compared to suantraiges, "sleep and gentleness"

44.e: Boand then warns Uaithne about the 'dangers' of the powerful effects of the music: warns about cattle hearing it when calving

44.f: Bóand warns about women hearing the music when giving birth to young

44.g: Boand warns that "men may die" upon hearing their music; then, they stopped playing. Music here seen as so powerful, as to be dangerous to the listener, even deadly.

[Number 45]

Name of Tale: "Tain Bo Fraich"  
"The Cattle-Raid of Fraich"

Manuscript: LL 183v-185v=facs. p. 248z11-252b5

Approximate Dating: 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "A chornairi íarum remisium dochum in dúine. Sennait di condid abbad tricha fer di sáincháemaib Ailella ar sírechtaí."

Source: Meid, W., ed., Tain Bo Fraich, D.I.A.S., Dublin, Dublin, 1967, p. 9.

[45A]: Translation:

"His horn-players then went before him to the fort. They played so that thirty of Ailill's finest men died of rapture."

Source: Byrne, M., and Dillon, M., "Tain Bo Fraich", EC 2, Paris, 1937, p. 8.

[45B]: Translation:

"Froech's hornplayers preceded him into the court, then, and such was their playing that thirty of Ailill's dearest ones died of yearning."

Source: Gantz, J., Early Irish Myths and Sagas, London, 1981, p. 121.

Location of Music: Ailill's courtyard in Connacht

Audience: Ailill's men of Connacht and Froech's people

Performer: Froech's hornplayers (cornairi)

Instrument: horns

Char.'s of Music:

45.1: Horn music portrayed as raptuous, very ecstatic, joyful

Effects of Music:

45.a: Thirty men died upon hearing the music; of "rapture" or "yearning"



[Number 46]

Name of Tale: "Tain Bo Fraich"  
"The Cattle-Raid of Fraich"

Manuscript: LL: (Trinity College Dublin H.2.18)  
183v-185v=facs. p. 248a11-252b5

Approximate Dating: 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "Atnagat a ngol oc dul úad co corastar na daíni  
báatar isind liss tar cend. Is de atá golgaire ban side la áes  
cíuil Hérenn."

Source: Meid, W., ed., Tain Bo Fraich, D.I.A.S., Dublin,  
1967, p. 10.

[46A]: Translation:

"They (the women) uttered their lament as they left him, so that  
the people in the enclosure were prostrated by it. Hence comes the  
Fairies' Lament of the musicians of Ireland."

Source: Byrne, M., and Dillon, M., "Tain Bo Fraich",  
EC 2, Paris, 1937, p. 9.

[46B]: Translation: [refers to a troop of sidhe women:]

"...they gave forth their cry, so that the people who were in the  
court were thrown prostrate. Hence it is that the musicians of  
Ireland have got the tune 'The Wail of the Fairy Women'...."

Source: Jackson, K.H., A Celtic Miscellany, New York,  
1971, p. 172.

Location of Music: Courtyard of Ailill and Medb in Connacht

Audience: Ailill's men of Connacht, and Froech's company

Performer: Fifty sidhe women from Sid of Cruachu

Instrument: Their voices; laments

Char.'s of Music:

46.1: very mournful laments

Effects of Music:

46.a: all the people in the courtyard were "prostrated" by it;  
thus ending up flat on their backs, overcome.

Name of Tale: "Tain Bo Fraich"  
"The Cattle-Raid of Fraich"

Manuscript: LL: 183-185v=facs. 248a11-252b5

Approximate Dating: 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "Sennat do chruittiri dún,' ol Ailill ri Fráech. 'Sennat ém,' ol Fráech. Crottbolg di chrocnib doborchon impu cona n-imdénam do phartaing foa n-imdénam di ór 7 argut. Bíann n-erbbad impu a mmedón; ba gilidir snechta. Sella dubglassa inna medón aide. Bruit lín gilidir fúan ngéssa imna téta. Crota di ór 7 arccut 7 findruine co ndelbaib nathrach 7 én 7 milchon di ór 7 arccut. Amal no glúaistis na téta sin, imreithitis na delba sin iarum inna firu imme cúaird."

Source: Meid, W., ed., Tain Bo Fraich, D.I.A.S., 1967, p. 4.

[47A]: Translation: "Let thy harpers play to us,' said Ailill to Froech; 'Let them play, in sooth,' said Froech. They had harp-bags of otter-skins covering them, with red ornament overworked with gold and silver. Deer-skin around them in the middle as white as snow, with dark grey spots in the center. Coverings of linen, white as the plumage of swans around the strings. Harps of gold and silver and white bronze with figures of serpents and birds and hounds on them. Those figures were of gold and silver. When those strings moved, those figures used to turn around the men." [harpers]

Source: Byrne, M., and Dillon, M., "Tain Bo Fraich", EC 2, Paris, 1937, p. 4.

[47B]: Translation: "... with the forms of snakes and birds and hounds in gold and silver on them; and as the strings moved, these forms would make circuits around the men."

Source: Gantz, J., Early Irish Myths and Sagas, London, 1981, p. 117.

Location of Music: Ailill's courtyard in Connacht

Audience: Aillil's men of Connacht, and Froech's company

Performer: harpists

Instrument: harps (crota)

Char.'s of Music:

47.1: Harp music as having the power to conjure up various ghost-like circuits around the harpers

Effects of Music:

47.a: Implies a clear supernatural connection between the strings of the harps, and their music, and the strange appearances of these ghostly "forms" of snakes, birds, and hounds.

Name of Tale: "Togail bruidne Da Derga"  
"Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel"

Manuscript: LU: 83a1-99a47; YBL: 91a1-104.10; H 1319: 477;  
Fermoy: 213-216; Stowe 992:85a-90a2;  
Egerton 1782: 118a-118b2; Egerton 92: 18.

Approximate Dating: LU: late 11th-early 12th c., YBL: 15th c.,  
H 1319: 15th c., F: 15th c., Stowe 992: 14th c.,  
Egerton 1782: 15th c.; Egerton 92: mid-15th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Imda na Cuslennach: Atchonnarc and imdai 7 nónbor indi. Mongae findbudi foraib, it é comallí uile. Bruit brecliga impu, 7 nói tinne cetharchóire cumtachtai uasaib. Bá leór suillse isind rigthig a cumtach fil forsna tinnib cetharchórib hísin. Samailte lat, a Fir rogain. Ni anse damsa a samail, for Fer rogain. Nónbor cuslennach insin doroachtátar co Conaire ar a airsclaib a Síd Breg. It é a n-anmand: Bind, Robind, Riारbind, Sibe, Dibe, Deichrind, Umall, Cumall, Ciallglind. It é cuslennaig ata dech fil isin domon. Dofóethsat nói[n]deichenbor léo, 7 fer cech airm, 7 fer cech fir, 7 maidfid cach fer dib buáid rig nó airig díberge, 7 immaricfa elúd dóib iarom asind orgain, ar bid imguin fri scáth imguin fríu. Génait 7 ni génaiter, úair is a síd dóib. Mairg iúras in n-orgain cid dáig ind nonbuir sin [namma]!..."

Source: Stokes, W., "Togail bruidne Da Derga",  
RC 22, Paris, 1901, p. 183-4.

[48A]: Translation: "The Room of the Pipers": "There I beheld a room with nine men in it. Hair fair and yellow was on them: they all are equally beautiful. Mantles speckled with color they wore, and above them were were nine bagpipes, four-tuned, ornamented. Enough light in the palace were the ornament on those four-tuned pipes. 'Liken thou them, O Fer regain.' 'Easy for me to liken them,' says Fer rogain. 'Those are the nine pipers that came to Conaire out of the Elfmound of Bregia, because of the noble tales about him. These are their names: Bind, Robind, Riारbind, Sibe, Dibe, Deichrind, Umall, Cumal, Ciallglind. They are the best pipers in the world. Nine enneads will fall before them, and a man for each of their weapons, and a man for each of themselves. And each of them will boast a victory over a king or a chief of the reavers. And they will escape from the Destruction; for a conflict with them will be a conflict with a shadow. They will slay, but they will not be slain, for they are out of an elfmound. Woe to him who shall wreak the Destruction, though it be only because of those nine!..."

Source: Ibid., p. 184.



[48B]: Translation: "...and above them were nine bagpipes, four-tuned, ornamented... 'Easy for me,' says Fer rogain. 'Those are the nine pipers that came to Conaire out of the fairy-mound of Breg, because of the noble tales about him. These are their names: Bind, Robind, Riarend, Sibe, Dibe, Deichrind, Umall, Cumall and Ciallgind. They are the best pipers in the world. Nine times nine will fall before them, and a man for each of their weapons, and a man for each of themselves. And each of them will boast a victory over a king or chief of the robbers. And they will escape from the destruction; for a conflict with them will be a conflict with a shadow. They will slay, but they will not be slain, for they are out of a fairy mound..."

Source: Cross, T., and Slover, C., Ancient Irish Tales,  
Dublin, 1936, p. 113.

Location of Music: a room in Da Derga's hostel, as reported by  
a spy from the plunderers

Audience: none specific, as it is a report about the pipers to  
the raiders

Performer: nine sidhe pipers of Breg, who have the supernatural  
ability to escape the destruction totally unharmed

Instrument: bagpipes

#### Char.'s of Music:

48.1: powerful fairy piping; "the best pipers in the world"  
as they are of sidhe blood, from Sid Breg.

#### Effects of Music:

48.a: deadly: "nine times nine will fall", plus "a man for each  
of their weapons" and "a man for each of themselves"

48.b: supreme worldly power granted to the pipers: as each  
piper will have a victory over a king or chieftain

48.c: Conflict with them is "futile", as they are of sidhe blood.  
They can kill, but cannot be killed.

[Number 49]

Name of Tale: "Togail bruidne Da Derga"  
"Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel"

Manuscript: LU: 83a1-99a47 and YBL: 91a1-104.10

Approximate Dating  
of Manuscripts: LU: late 11th-early 12th c.; YBL 15th c.

Old Ir. Text:

"...Is bindiu bindfodhrugud in claidib sin oldás bindfogur na  
cuisleann n-órdae fo-CHANAIT céol isin ríghthaig..."

Source: Knott, E., Togail bruidne Da Derga, D.I.A.S.,  
Dublin, 1936, p. 30.

[49]: Translation:

"Sweeter the music of that sword than the sweet sound of the golden  
pipes that drone in the royal house."

Source: Gantz, J., Early Irish Myths and Sagas, London,  
1981, p. 89.

Location of Music: royal stronghold

Audience: None specifically: A comparison is made between pipes  
in the royal house and Conall's sword in battle

Performer: a warrior, Conall, and his sword

Instrument: a sword in battle (inanimate object as musical)

Char.'s of Music:

49.1: swéet

Effects of Music:

49.a: None specifically; is a comparison.

[Number 50]

Name of Tale: "Togail bruidne Da Derga"  
"Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel"

Manuscript: LU: 83a1-99a47; YBL: 91a1-104.10; H 1319: p. 477;  
F: (Fermoy) 213-216; Stowe 992: 85a-90a2;  
Egerton 1782: 118a, 118b2; Egerton 92: 18.

Approximate Dating: LU: late 11th-early 12th c.; YBL: 15th c.,  
H 1319: 15th c., F: 15th c., Stowe 992: 14th c.,  
Egerton 1782: 15th c., Egerton 92: mid-15th c.

Old Ir. Text: "...ocus ba bindithir la cach n-aen guth aroile inn  
Erinn fria flaith ocus betis teta mennchrot...`Is ina flaith as  
chombind la cach fer guth, araile ocus betís téta mendchrot, ar  
febas na cána 7 in tsida 7 in cháincomraic fail sechnon na hErend."

Source: Stokes, W., "Togail Bruidne Da Derga",  
RC 22, Paris, 1901, p. 27, 166-7.

[50A]: Translation: "...and such abundance of good will that no  
one slew another in Erin during his [Conaire's] reign. And to  
every one in Erin his fellow's voice seemed as sweet as the strings  
of lutes...[Later in text:] "Each man deems the other's voice as  
melodious as the strings of lutes..."

Source: Ibid., p. 28, 168.

Location of Music: land of Erin

Audience: the people of Erin

Performer: the people of Erin

Instrument: each person's voice in Erin

Char.'s of Music:

- 50.1: sweet--comparison to the sound of human voices talking  
in everyday life, as being like "sweet" music
- 50.2: Conaire's peaceful reign compared to music: praising a king

Effects of Music:

- 50.a: peaceful: all over Erin, "no one slew another", and each  
other's voice seemed "as sweet as" the strings  
of lutes.

- 50.b: healing effect, as war or conflict is avoided in  
Conaire's reign as king

THE CYCLE OF THE KINGS LITERATURE

[Number 51]

Title: "Orgain Denna Rig" (Cycle of Labraid Loingsech)  
"Destruction of Dind Rig"

Manuscript: LL: p. 269-270.

Approximate Dating: 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "Ingen la Scoríath, Moríath a hainm. No bithe 'co a forcomét col-léir, uair na fríth céili dingbala di fochetóir. A mmathair oca comét. Ni ro chotlaiset a dá súil ríam acht indala n-ai oc aire a ingine. Ro charastar immorro ind ingen inti Labraid. Báí comairle eter in n-ingen 7 Labraid. Ro bóí urnam mór la Scoríath do Feraib Morca. Is ed comairle dorónsat, Craiphtine do seinm suantraige iarsind ól co comtholad a mmathair-si co roissed-som in n-imdaí. Ba fír son immorro. Ni ro cheil Craiphtine a chruitte dadaig, coro chotail in banscál 7 co comarnaic ind lánamain...Is and asbert Ferchertne: Ni ceilt céis céol da chruit Craiphtine co corastar for sluagu suanbás consreth coibnius etir sceo...`Labraid', or se, `condranic frie iar for tálguð do chruit Craiphtine'...ocus deberat sluagad fer Muman iarsin cor-roachtatar Dinn rí in cetorcain. Ocus atroas techt ar in orggain co ndernsat comairli mbrecaig ind oic amuich .i. Craiphtine do dul forsin doa in dúni do seinm suantraige don tśluag innund condarralad dara cend. Ocus in sluag ammuig do thabairt a n-aigthe fri lár 7 a mmeóir ina cluasaib conna cloistís in seinm. Co mbo ed ón dognithe and, 7 co torchratar ind fír, [thall dara cenn hi suan R], 7 co ndechas ar in dún, 7 co ralad ar in tśluaíg, 7 co ro hort in dún. Ro bóí-si didu for in tśluagud .i. Moríath. Nirbo miad lési didu a mméra do chur ina cluasaib ria céol feisin, co mbóí tri thráth ina cotlud, ar ni ro lamad a gluasacht."

Source: Stokes, W., "Orgain Dind Rig", ZCP 3, London, 1901, p. 5-6.

[51]: Translation:

"Scoriath' had a daughter, whose name was Moriath. They were guarding her carefully, for no husband fit for her had been found at once. Her mother was keeping her. The mother's two eyes never slept at the same time, for one of the two was watching her daughter...[however] the damsel loved Labraid. There was a plan between her and him. Scoriath held a great feast for the Men of Morca. This is the plan they made--after the drinking, Craiphtine [the harpist] should play the slumber-strain, so that her mother

should fall asleep and Labraid should reach the chamber. Now that came to pass. Craiphtine hid not his harp that night, so that the queen fell asleep, and the loving couple came together...[Later in text:]...Then said Ferchetne: [to Scoriath, the mother]: 'The lute hid no music from Craiphtine's harp till he cast a death-sleep on the hosts...Labraid foregathered with her after ye had been lulled by Craiphtine's harp.' [Later:] '...until they reached Dind Rig for the first destruction. And they were unable to destroy it until the warriors outside made a deceptive plan, namely, that Craiphtine should go on the rampart of the fortress to play the slumber-strain to the host within, so that it might be overturned, and that the host outside should put their faces to the ground and their fingers in their ears that they might not hear the playing. So that was done there, and the men inside fell asleep, and the fortress was captured, and the garrison was slaughtered and the fortress was sacked. Now Moriath was on that hosting. She did not deem it honourable to put her fingers into her ears at her own music, so that she lay asleep for three days, no one daring to move her...' "

Source: Ibid., p. 11.

Location of Music: Scoriath's feast; later, at Dind Rig fortress

Audience: Guests at Scoriath's feast; later, Dind Rig defenders

Performer: Craiphtine

Instrument: harp (cruit)

Char.'s of Music:

51.1: very pleasant; trance-like music

Effects of Music:

51.a: puts audience to sleep, in both instances



(Cycle of Eochaid Feidlech)

Title: "Inni diata cuslinn Brighde 7 Aidhed mic Dhichoime"  
 "Whence is (St.) Brigit's pipe, & the Death of Dichoim's Son"

Manuscript: Stowe D.4.2, fo. 32b1-53b2.

Approximate Dating: 10th c. tale, according to Kuno Meyer.

[NOTE: The following reference, from the above tale, is often known by the more folkloric title "King Eochaid Has Horse's Ears". In this tale, King Eochaid has an unusual disability, that of being born with horse's ears. In a desperate effort to hide this condition from his kingdom, he would kill every man who would shave him. One day, one of the shavers tried to kill him first, and the two of them then made a deal--the young shaver, Mac Dichoime, could remain, as long as he did not reveal the secret. He eventually got very ill, but was then cured of having to keep the situation secret, by the spilling of his blood near a grove of tree saplings, who "overheard" him. Soon, a harper, with his fellow musicians from Munster, stopped at the site, and his harp itself "heard" the secret from the saplings; the harpers then go to play for King Eochaid, who was very angry to be confronted with his secret, revealed by the harp. He tied up the harpers, who pled their innocence. Realizing that the saplings had revealed the secret to the harp, and not the young shaver Mac Dichoime, he frees the harper and rewards him. The king then admits his condition to the court. Then, Mac Dichoime went back to the saplings, made a double pipe from them, and became king later himself...]

Old Ir. Text: [NOTE: K. Meyer says of this text: "The manuscript is carelessly written [10th c.] and requires numerous corrections". As there has been no updated unabridged edition since published, this older Old Irish text must be used at this point.]

... "Luid `ar sain in cruitire do thigh in rig 7 roferad fāilte mōr fris lasin rīg. Bertair dano hi tigh lighi ind rig. `Sennaidh', for se, ol Eochaid, `cruit menmannraid dun!' `Maith dun,' ol seat. Insucut do senmairm dó 7 iḡ ed sennait iarum .i. `Eochaid fer sceith, da n-óe n-eich fair.' `Tucthar tene 7 caindel isin tegh!' ol in ri. Feib doruacht in tene 7 dorocratar na caindle 7 na sutralla solasta: `Oirgidh' ol sé, `for broinne na cruitire 7 nodoscenglaid!' 7 docuas on focetoir co rocenglaid 7 batar co matain `ra cengaltaib...Luid immorro mac Dichoime cosna flescaibh iar dtain, co ndergenai cuis lind ndegabail dib. Ocus gabais iar sin righe i ndegaid Eochach 7 cia rogab rige, ni roscar fria chuisslind..."

Source: Meyer, K., "Stories and Songs from Irish Manuscripts VII", Otia Merseiana Vol. III, Liverpool, 1903, p. 46-54.

[52] Translation:

..."Then the harper went to the house of the king, and was well received by him. He and his company were taken to the house where the king lay. 'Strike up!' said Eochaid. 'Harp us something ingenious!' 'That is our intention,' say they. They begin to play to him, and what they played was: 'Eochaid, the man of the shield, has two horse's ears.' 'Let light and a candle be brought into the house!' cried the king. When the light and the candles and shining lamps had come, he said: 'Throw yourselves upon the chest of the harpers and bind them!' And forthwith they were bound, and they continued in their fetters until morning...[King Eochaid then realizes the situation, admits his condition, and frees the harpers.]...Then Mac Dichoime went to the saplings and made a double pipe from them. And afterwards he obtained the kingship after Eochaid, and though he had become king he did not part from his pipe."

Source: Ibid.

Location: a grove of tree saplings

Audience: a harp itself "hears" a secret

Performer: Tree saplings

Instruments: the wind, or the "whispers" of the trees; and, a double pipe later made from the saplings

Char.'s of Music:

52.1: "Secret, supernatural, intangible" music of the whispers of the tree saplings.

Effects of Music:

52.a: a musical instrument itself "hears" the supernatural "music" of a grove of tree saplings, who then reveal a secret to it. (Perhaps implying that music and/or musical instruments are particularly "sensitive" to pick up certain secrets.)

52.b: young shaver goes back, makes a double pipe from the same grove of saplings, and becomes king.

[Number 53]

Title: "Echtra Airt meic Cuind" (Cycle of Conn Cetchathach)  
"The Adventures of Art son of Conn"

Manuscript: Book of Fermoy, p. 139-145.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "Scela na hinghine tra. Fuair curach gan frichnum imruma fair ach a legan re coigidal na gaithi ar fut na mara co tarla co Beind Edáin meic Etgáith hf."

Source: Best, R.I., "The Adventures of Art son of Conn,"  
Eriu 3, Dublin, 1907, p. 152.

[53]: Translation:

\*

"As for the maiden, she found a coracle which had no need of rowing, but leaving it to the harmony of the wind over sea she came to Ben Edair meic Etgaith."

(\*coracle: a wooden boat.)

Source: Ibid., p. 153.

Location of Music: analogy: harmony of the wind over the sea

Audience: young maiden in a wooden boat

Performer: Nature itself

Instrument: Wind

Char.'s of Music:

53.1: "harmony" of the wind; wind as musical.

53.2: the interplay between the wind and the sea

Effects of Music:

53.a: boat is led on a safe journey, without any oars--only the  
"music" of the wind to guide it.

[Number 54]

Title: "Cath Maige Mucrama" (Cycle of Lugaid mac Con)  
"Battle of Mag Mucrama"

Manuscript: O'Grady: Book of Lismore, fol. 159  
Stokes: LL: p. 288a.

Approximate Dating: Book of Lismore [15th c.]; LL [12th c.]

Old Ir. Text: "oc techt dóib sech ammag co cualatar in ceol issin dus ibair ro búí óssindes. Berait leo co Ailill aridisi .i. in fer thucsat assin dus ár bátar oc imresain imme corrucad aib breith dóib. fer bec. trí thét in a thimpán. cia t'ainm. Fer fí mac Eogabail. cid dobrintái or Ailill. atám oc imresain im in fersa. cinnas fir so. timpánach maith. seinnter dún a cheol or Ailill. dogéntar or sé. ro shephainn dóib dna goltraig conadcorastar i ngol oculus i cói oculus derchóiniud. ro ges dó anad de. ro sheinn dna gentraige conadcorastar i ngen ngáire acht naptar echnái a scaim. ro sephainn dóib dna suantraighe condacorastar i suan on trath co araile..."

Source: O'Grady, S.H., Silva Gadelica, London, 1892,  
Vol. 1, p. 311.

[54A]: Translation:

[Eogan and Lughaid go to visit Art, son of Conn:]

"...as they came along the flat land by the river, in a clump of yew that overhung a certain rapid water they heard music. Back to Oilíoll then they convey a [wee] man whom they had plucked out of the clump, in order that the king...should arbitrate between them: a man it was with three strings to his timpan. 'What is thy name?' they had asked, and 'Fer fi, son of Eogabal', he had answered. 'What has turned you back?' said Oilíoll. 'Quarrelling we are about this man.' 'And what manner of man is this?' [asked Oilíoll]. 'A good timpanist'. 'Let him play his music for us,' Oilíoll said; and the musician said, 'it shall be done.' Then he played them the 'goltraighe', or weeping-strain, reducing them to weep, to wail, and bitterly to lament, till it was besought of him that he would desist. Next he played the 'gentraighe', or laughter-strain, so forcing them all to a cachination such that it was barely but their very lungs became visible. Now he performed the 'suantraighe', or sleep-strain, and threw them into a slumber lasting from one trath to another.."

Source: O'Grady, S.H., Silva Gadelica, London, 1892,  
Vol. 2, p. 349.

[54B]: Translation:

"As they were going past the plain they heard the music in the bush of yew...They bring back with them to Ailill the man whom they took out of the bush...A little man was he, with three strings in his cithern\* 'Let his music be played for us,' says Ailill. 'It shall be done,' says he. Then he played for them wail-music until he set them crying and weeping and lamenting. He was entreated to stop, whereupon he played laugh-music until he put them into such a fit of laughter that their lungs were almost seen. Then he played sleep-music for them until he sent them into slumber from that hour to the same time next day..."

\*[Note: "timpanach" in Old Irish text]

Source: Stokes, W., "The Battle of Mag Mucrime", "Revue Celtique" 13, Paris, 1892, p. 437-9.

Location of Music: In a yew tree, and in king Ailill's presence

Audience: Eoghan and Lugaid; later, king Ailill and all present

Performer: "Fer fi, son of Eogabal"--a wee sidhe harpist

Instrument: a wee timpan

Char.'s of Music:

54.1: sidhe music played by a wee sidhe musician

54.2: sidhe music played in a yew tree, by running water

54.3: "wail-strain" (goltraighe)

54.4: "laughter-strain" (gentraighe)

54.5: "sleep-strain" (suantraighe)

Effects of Music:

54.a: the men who found him fought over him (good music is , obviously very highly valued)

54.b: a king had to intervene in the dispute

54.c: audience cries and laments; begs him to stop

54.d: audience laughs so hard, their lungs nearly seen

54.c: audience fell asleep for one whole day

[Number 55]

Title: "Cath Maige Mucrama" (Cycle of Lugaid mac Con)  
"Battle of Mag Mucrama"

Manuscript: LL: p. 288a.

Approximate Dating: 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text:

..."Luid Ailill iarum aidchi samna do[f]recare a ech i n-Áne Chliach...Rolommad in tilach in n-aid-chi sin 7 ni fes cia ros-lomm. Fecht fodí dó fon innas[s]in. Ba inġnad lesseom...[Ferchess] dolluid side dia acallaim. Tiagait andíís aidchi samna issin tilaig. Anaid Ailill is'tilaig. Baí Ferches frie anechtair. Dofuitt didiu Cotlud for Ailill ic costecht fri fogilt na cethrae. Dollotar asin tśíd, 7 Eogabul mac Durgabuil rí in tśída ina ndíaid, 7 Áne ingen Eogabuil, 7 timpán creda in a láim oca seinm do araábélaib."

Source: Stokes, W., "Cath Maige Mucrima",  
RC 13, Paris, 1892, p. 434-436.

[55]: Translation:

..."Then Ailill went one Halloween to pasture his horses on Ane Cliach...The hill was stripped bare that night and no one knew who stripped it. This happened to him twice in that wise. It was a marvel to him...Ferchess came to speak with him, (and) on Halloween they [two] go to the hill. Ailill waits on the hill. Ferchess was outside it. Then sleep fell on Ailill listening to the grazing of the cattle. They [i.e., those who had been 'mysteriously' stripping the hill at night] had come out of the fairy-mound, followed by Eogabul son of Durgabul, the king of the mound, and Eogabul's daughter Ane, was before him, with a brazen cithern\* in her hand which she was playing for him..."

Source: Ibid., p. 435.

[\*: also referred to as a "bronze lyre" by M. Dillon, The Cycles of the Kings, London, 1946, p. 17.]

Location of Music: Ane Cliach, a hill

Audience: Aillill and Ferchess

Performer: a fairy woman Ane, daughter of Eogabul

Instrument: timpan (here, translator calls a bronze "lyre")

Char.'s of Music:

55.1: sidhe music played by a sidhe musician

55.2: sidhe music heard at Samhain, eve. of November 1

55.3: music associated with destruction of a hill--"stript" bare

Effects of Music:

55.a: Music as a signal indicating that the destruction of the hill was about to begin, on Samhain Eve

55.b: a question here regarding Ailill "falling asleep" while listening to the cattle:  
[without making undue assumptions, one cannot help but notice the similarity between this type of event and frequent comparisons often made in these early Irish texts of humans falling asleep at the sound of animals, etc. It is almost as though "the grazing of the cattle" may have a "music" of its own, to help lull one to sleep, even though the text here doesn't specifically state this.]

[Number 56]

Title: "Echtra Cormaic i Tir Tairngiri" (Cycle of Cormac)  
"Cormac's Adventure in the Land of Promise"

Manuscript: Book of Ballymote, p. 260b-263b  
YBL col. 889-898

Approximate Dating: both 15th c. manuscripts

Old Ir. Text: "...Craebh airgid co tri hublaib oir fria ais. Ba leor peted 7 arpeatad immorro eistecht risin ceol dogníð in craebh, a[r] rochoideoldais fir athgaiti nó mna siuil nó fiallach galair risin ceol dogníð sin intan docroitheadh in chraeb."

Source: Stokes, W., "Cormac's Adventure in the Land of Promise", Irische Texte, Series 3, Leipzig, 1891, p. 193.

[56] Translation:

[Cormac meets Manannan at his courtyard, from the Land of Promise:]

"...A branch of silver with three golden apples was on his shoulder. Delight and amusement enough it was to listen to the music made by the branch, for men sore-wounded, or women in child-bed, or folk in sickness would fall asleep at the melody which was made when that branch was shaken."

Source: Ibid., p. 212.

Location of Music: in the presence of king Cormac

Audience: King Cormac

Performer: Manannan, from tir tairngiri, and his musical branch

Instrument: silver branch with three golden apples on it

Char.'s of Music:

- 56.1: sidhe music by a sidhe musician from the Otherworld
- 56.2: sidhe music coming from a tree branch
- 56.3: delightful, amusing, joyful music
- 56.4: music made when this branch was shaken by Manannan
- 56.5: association of this silver branch with the singing of poetic verse by Manannan

Effects of Music:

- 56.a: Delightful and joyful music
- 56.b: calming effects: on men in battle; would fall asleep
- 56.c: calming women in child-bed; they would fall asleep
- 56.d: calming ill people; they too would fall asleep
- 56.e: king was entertained, and goes to Land of Promise



[Number 57]

Title: "Echtra Cormaic i Tir Tairngiri" (Cycle of Cormac)  
"Cormac's Adventure in the Land of Promise"

Manuscript: Book of Ballymote, p. 260b-263b  
YBL, col. 889-898

Approximate Dating: both 15th c. manuscripts

Old Ir. Text: "Atchi didiu topur taitneamach isin lis, 7 coic srotha ass, 7 na sloigh imaseach ic ol usci na sroth. Nai cuill buana oscind in tobuir. Focerdaidh andsin na cuill corcarrda a cnai isin topur conus-tennat na coic eicne filead isin topur, co curtar a mbolga for na srothaibh. Fuaim eassa na sroth sin didiu, ba bindi na cach ceol a cantais."

Source: Stokes, W., "Cormac's Adventure in the Land of Promise", Irische Texte, Series 3, Leipzig, 1891, p. 195.

[57]: Translation:

"Then he sees in the garth a shining fountain, with five streams flowing out of it, and the hosts in turn drinking its water. Nine hazels of Buan grow over the well. The purple hazels drop their nuts into the fountain, and the five salmon which are in the fountain sever them and send their husks floating down the streams. Now the sound of the falling of those streams was more melodious than any music that men sing."

Source: Ibid., p. 213.

Location of Music: tir tairngiri ("Land of Promise") at a shining fountain there in the Otherworld

Audience: King Cormac

Performer: five streams flowing from this shining fountain in the Otherworld

Instrument: water: five streams, like waterfalls

Char.'s of Music;

57.1: ■supernatural sidhe music of waterfalls from Otherworld

57.2: melodious sound of the five streams

57.3: Nine sacred hazel nuts associated with the streams, and with the Otherworld, poetry, and music

Effects of Music;

57.a: sounds beautiful and melodious, the five waterfalls

57.b: compared as being more beautiful than mortal music

[Number 58]

Title: "Echtra Cormaic i Tir Tairngiri" (Cycle of Cormac)  
"Cormac's Adventure in the Land of Promise"

Manuscript: Book of Ballymote, p. 260b-263b  
YBL, col. 889-898

Approximate Dating: 15th c.

Old Ir. Text:

..."Conais in t-oglach dord dho cor' cuir a suan."

Source: Stokes, W., "Cormac's Adventure in the Land of Promise", Irische Texte, Series 3, Leipzig, 1891, p. 197.

[58]: Translation:

..."The warrior [Manannan] sang a burden\* to him and put him to sleep."

Source: Ibid., p. 215.

[\* translated as a "song" in Cross, T., and Slover, C., Ancient Irish Tales, Dublin, 1969, p. 506.]

Location of Music: presence of Cormac, a king

Audience: King Cormac

Performer: Manannan, from tir tairngiri ("Land of Promise")

Instrument: Manannan's voice; singing

Char.'s of Music:

58.1: sidhe singing of poetic verse to a king, Cormac

58.2: it is implied that this music is very pleasant

Effects of Music:

58.a: puts Cormac to sleep

[Number 59]

Title: "Esnada Tige Buchet" (Cycle of Cormac)  
"Songs of Buchet's House"

Manuscripts and Approximate Dating: LL 270a-271a46 (12th c.);  
YBL 113a-114b (15th c.); Rawl. B 502, 73a-73b (12th c.);  
Rawl. B 512, 122a-122b (15th c.); H.2.17 (15th c.).

Old Ir. Text: "Esnad tige Buchet dona dámaib .i. a gen gáre ass frisna dama: Fochen dúib, bid maith dúib [linni R1] bud maith dano dunni libsi. Esnad in choicat láech cona n-etaigib corcraib 7 cona n-erredaib do airfitiud intan batis mesca [na dama R2]. Esnad dano in choicat ingen for lár in tige ina lennaib corcraib cona mongaib órbuidib dara n-etaige 7 a n-esnad oc airfitiud in tšluaig. Esnad in choecat chruitte iarsin co mmatin [ac talgud R2] in tšluaig [do chiul R2]. Is de sin atá Esnada Tigi Buchet."

Source: Stokes, W., "Songs of Buchet's House", RC 25,  
Paris, 1904, p. 30-2.

[59]: Translation:

"The song of Buchet's house to the companies; his laughing cry to the companies: 'Welcome to you! It will be well to you with us! Let it then be well to us with you!' The song of the fifty warriors with their purple garments and their armours, to make music when the companies were drunk. The song, too, of the fifty maidens in the midst of the house, in their purple dresses, with their golden-yellow manes over their garments, and their song delighting the host. The song of the fifty harps afterwards till morning, soothing the host with music. Hence is the name 'The Songs of Buchet's House.'"

Source: Ibid., p. 31-33.

Location of Music: house of the nobleman Buchet

Audience: all present at Buchet's celebration

Performers: Fifty warriors and maidens singing, and fifty harps  
playing all night until morning

Instruments: Vocal and harp; everything in Buchet's house

Char.'s of Music:

59.1: very joyful music overall: both singing and harp playing

Effects of Music:

59.a: great joy, adds significantly to the overall celebration

59.b: music described as "soothing the host" until morning;  
music as comforting.

[Number 60]

Title: "Aided Muirchertach mac Erca" (Cycle of Muirchertach)  
"Death of Muirchertach"

Manuscript: YBL: col. 310-320; facs. p. 313-318.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text:

"7 dochuaid for mullach in lecta, et dixit:  
Duma na clog so co brath  
fodesta ro finnfa cach,  
leacht in trenfhir maic Erca..."

Source: Stokes, W., "The Death of Muirchertach mac Erca",  
RC 23, Paris, 1902, p. 402.

[60]: Translation:

[Bishop Cairnech makes a grave for Muircertach, while he was still alive, because he is spending too much time with a fairy woman named Sin:]

"And he went to the top of the grave and said:  
The mound of these bells forever  
Henceforward every one will know  
The grave of the champion Mac Erca..."

Source: Ibid., p. 403.

Location of Music: bells on top of a cairn (hill of a grave)

Audience: none specific

Performer: Bishop Cairnech

Instrument: Bells

Char.'s of Music:

60.1: music portrayed here as a way of publicly humiliating  
someone (as Bishop Cairnech puts bells on Muirchertach's  
grave while he is still alive.)

Effects of Music:

60.a: Creates public awareness of Muircertach's grave and  
the fact that the Bishop no longer approves of  
him or his activities

[Number 61]

Title: "Aided Muircertach mac Erca" (Cycle of Muirchertach)  
"Death of Muircertach"

Manuscript: YBL: col. 310-320; facs. p. 313-318.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text:

"Cid ma tancabar on chill, a macu légingd lanbind?"

"Na clerig na creid co brath, uair ni chanait acht anfath, na len  
a rann cen bindi..."

Source: Stokes, W., "The Death of Muircertach mac Erca",  
RC 23, Paris, 1902, p. 414-416.

[61]: Translation:

[Muircertach says to the clergy, whom he considers good:]

"Why came ye from the church, O sons of full-melodious study?"

[Later in the text, the fairy woman Sin describes the clerics  
as bad, and therefore non-melodious:]

"Never believe the clerics, for they chant nothing save unreason:  
Follow not their unmelodious verses..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: Discussion between Muircertach and clergy

Audience: Muircertach

Performer: clergy

Instrument: voices; music as an analogy

Char.'s of Music:

61.1: Music as an analogy of whether something or someone is  
good (i.e. "melodious"), or bad ("unmelodious")

Effects of Music:

61.a: A musical analogy is used here by a king as an effective  
tool to judge character, as the king describes the good  
clergy as "melodious", while the "sinful" woman describes  
their character as "unmelodious".

[Number 62]

Title: "Scel Mongain" (Cycle of Mongan mac Fiachna)  
"The Story of Mongan"

Manuscript: LU, 133a, with variants of Betham 145, p. 64;  
H.2.16, col. 912; and Egerton 88, fo. 15b,1.

Approximate Dating: LU: late 11th-early 12th c.; and  
H.2.16: 15th c., Egerton 88: 16th c.

Old Ir. Text: ...Asbert in fili nodnáirfed dia áithgiud, ocus  
no-áerfad a athair ocus a máthair ocus a senathair, ocus do-  
chechnad for a n-usciu connágebtha íasc ina n-inberaib. Do-  
chechnad for a fedaib connátibertaib torad, for a maige comtís  
ambriti chaidchi cacha clainde...

Source: Meyer, K., The Voyage of Bran, Vol. I,  
Appendix III, London, 1895, p. 46.

[62]: Translation:

"...The poet said he would satirize him with his lampoons, and he  
would satirize his father and his mother and his grandfather, and  
he would sing spells upon their waters, so that fish should not be  
caught in their river-mouths. He would sing upon their woods, so  
that they should not give fruit, upon their plains, so that they  
should be barren forever of any produce..."

Source: Ibid., p. 49.

Location of Music: Poetic singing of spells (curses) on king's  
rivers, woods, plains

Audience: none specifically stated.

Performer: Forgoll the poet

Instrument: Vocal singing of poetic curses

Char.'s of Music:

62.1: poetic "incantations" sung by poet

Effects of Music:

62.a: Attempt to totally devastate prosperity of Mongan:  
no fish, no fruit, no grains.

[Number 63]

Title: "Cath Almaine" (Cycle of Fergal mac Maile Duin)  
"The Battle of Allen"

Manuscript: YBL: col. 939; some fragments from the Book of Fermoy, and the Biblio. Royale MS. Brussels.

Approximate Dating: YBL: 15th c.; Fermoy: 15th c.;  
Brussels: mid-17th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Ragatsa and, ar aenoclach amra d'feraib Muman. Luid sen amach 7 a errad catha 7 comlaind uime, co rocht co hairm a mbai corp Fergail. Amal bai[and] co cualai inni nescairi isin aer, ar rocloss uili fris hé. Timarnad duib o maig nime airfided bar tigerna do denam anocht .i. Fergal mac Maili duin, [cia] dorochrabair uili in bar n-eicsib sunn araen re bar tigerna .i. ri Fergal, [ná tairmesccadh erfúath no hécommart sib d'airfidedh anocht d'Fergal- B.] Ro chualadar immorro in ceol iartain, iter aes dana 7 cornairi 7 cuisleannach 7 cruitiri, co cuala immorro na ceola ecsamla, 7 ni cuala riam na iarum ceol bud ferr. Co cuala didu in guth isin tsup illuachra, ba bindi in ceol isin anad ceola in domain. Luid in t-oclaech iarsin ina dochum. Na tairr cucum, ar in cenn fris. Cid on, cindus atai, ar in t-oclaech. Misi Donn Bo, ar in ceand, 7 ro naisced orm airfided dom thigerna anocht .i. do Fergal: ni do Murchad iter, ar in ceand, [7 na erchoididh dham, B.] Cait ata Fergal fen, ar an t-oclaech. Is e chorp in taitneamach rit anall, ar in ceand...Tucas tra, ar in t-oclaech [cenn Dhuinnbo, B.] Tobair ar an uaitni thall, ar Murcad...dena airfided duind, a Duind Bo, fodaig Maic De .i. Isa Crist, i ndeachaid gnúis...Impais [Donnbó, F.] iarum a aiged refraighidh in tigi ardaig cumad dorchá do, 7 tocbaís a chruisich os aird co mbo bindi [oldas, F.] cach ceol ar tuind talman, co mbadar in slog uili ag cai 7 ac toirrsi ria truaigi 7 ri taidiuiiri in ciuil ro chan."

Source: Stokes, W., "The Battle of Allen", RC 24, Paris, 1903, p. 58-62.

[63]: Translation: "I will go," says Baethgalach, a valiant warrior of the men of Munster. Forth he fared, wearing his dress of battle and combat, till he reached the place where Fergal's body lay. As he was there he heard the proclamation in the air, for all heard it: 'Ye have been commanded from the Plain of Heaven to make minstrelsy tonight for your lord, Fergal son of Mael Duin. Though all ye poets have fallen here together with your lord, let not fear or feebleness prevent you from making music tonight for Fergal.' They heard the music afterwards, both poets and hornplayers and pipers and harpers, and he (Baethgalach) heard the various melodies; and never did he hear, before or after, better music.

Then he heard a voice from a head in the wisp of rushes, and sweeter was that tune than the tunes of the world! Then the warrior went towards it. 'Do not come to me,' says the head to him. 'What? How art thou?' asks the warrior. 'I am Donn Bo,' says the head. 'and I have been pledged to make music tonight for my lord, that is, for Fergal, not by any means for Murchad. So do not annoy me.' 'Where is Fergal himself?' says the warrior. 'That is his body, the shining one, beyond thee,' says the head. [the warrior takes the severed head of Donn Bo to where the Leinstermen were.] 'I have brought Donn Bo's head,' the warrior answered. 'Put it on the pillar yonder,' says Murchad... 'make minstrelsy for us, O Donn Bo, for the sake of God's Son, (to wit, Jesus Christ, into whose presence he had gone)... Then Donn Bo turned his face to the wall of the house so that it might be dark to him, and he raised his 'cruinsech' (?) on high so that it was sweeter than any melody on the earth's sward; and all the host were weeping and sad at the piteousness and misery of the music that he sang."

Source: Ibid., p. 59-63.

Location of Music: presence of king Murchad, after battle  
between men of Leinster and Munster

Audience: dead king Fergal, and all present after battle

Performer: severed head of minstrel Donn Bo

Instrument: Vocal

Char.'s of Music:

63.1: sweet--said to be "sweeter than any melody on earth"

63.2: very sad, mournful music in honor of a dead king

63.3: connection between music and the dead, and severed heads

Effects of Music:

63.a: make audience weep "at the piteousness and misery" of his singing



[Number 64]

Title: "Cath Maige Rath" (Cycle of Domnall mac Aeda)  
"The Battle of Moira"

Manuscript: YBL col. 945

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "...`Is grani lim innosa,' or in dearcaid, `in ceol sana rocluinnim sechnon in chatha .i. fedgaire na claideb illamaib na laech 7 na lath ngaili na ceann 7 na cnam."

Source: Marstrander, C., "Cath Muigi Rath Anso", Eriu V, Dublin, 1911, p. 242.

[64] Translation:

"...`Hateful to me now,' said the spy, `is the varied music I hear throughout the battle, the swish of the swords in the hands of heroes and doughty champions and the crushing of heads and bones..."

Source: Ibid., p. 243.

Location of Music: battlefield

Audience: battle watchman/spy

Performers: the sound of the swords in the heat of battle

Instruments: swords

Char.'s of Music:

64.1: "hateful", deadly music of the swords in battle

Effects of Music:

64.a: swords' hateful, war-like sounds signal great negativity to the spy, who reports back an ominous situation

[Number 65]

Title: "Echtra Taidg maic Cein"  
"Adventure of Teigue, son of Cian"

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fol. 159.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "Énlaith álainn édrocht oc tomait na gcaer fínemna. ocus ba hécsamail énlaith búí ann .i. eoin ghela co cennaib corcra ocus co nguilbnib órda. canait ceol ocus airphéited oc tomait na gcaer. ocus ba sirrechtach sainemail in ceol sin. ár no choidéldáis aes othair ocus aes athghaeta fris. conid do sin ro chan Taidg an láidsi síos. `Binn lem menmain mar mhidim faeide in cheoilse dochluinim...'"

Source: O'Grady, S.H., Silva Gadelica, Vol. I, London, 1892, p. 338.

[65] Translation: "Birds beautiful and brilliant feasted on these grapes...as they fed, they warbled music and minstrelsy that was melodious and superlative, to which patients of every kind and the repeatedly wounded would have fallen asleep; with reference to which it was that Teigue chanted this lay following:

`Sweet to my fancy, as I consider them, the  
strains of this melody to which I listen..."

Source: Ibid., Vol. II, p. 390.

Location: Otherworld

Audience: Teigue and his companions

Performer: beautiful birds

Instrument: birds' singing

Char.'s of Music:

65.1: Music in Otherworld: birds singing

65.2: sweet music of birds; "melodious", "superlative"

Effects of Music:

65.a: Trance-like; it is compared to being so pleasant that even the wounded or ill would fall asleep to it

[Number 66]

Title: "Echtra Taidg maic Cein"  
"Adventure of Teigue son of Cian"

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, col. 159

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "ocus mar do bátar ar na bríathraib sin confacad[er] tri heoin aille tré shlios an tige istech chuca .i. én gorm co cenn corra. ocus én corcra co cenn uaine. ocus én brec condath óir for a chenn. ocus suidit forsin abaill nalainn búí ina bfiadhnaise. ocus caithit aball gacha heoin ocus canait ceol milis muisicda co coidéldáis othair fris. ragait latsa na heoin út ar Clídna. ocus béráit eolus duit. ocus dogénat ceol ocus airfítéd dúib. ocus ní bia duba ná dobrón oraib ar muir ná ar tír nó co roisdí Eirinn... Imrit rompa a curach caem coimretha tar drumcla na haibéise anbháeile. ocus do gabsat na heoin ac cantain chiuil ocus airtifid dóib. ocus gér dhubch dobrónach iat roime iar scarthain risin tír toirthig as a táncatar ro fáiltin ocus ro áilgenaig; airfítéd ocus ilcheol na nén niamda nairbitnech comtar subaig somenmnaig uile iat. ocus in tan ro dercsat dia néis ní facatar in tír as a táncatar ár tucad [di]chiltcair dhiamair dráidechta tairrsi fó chédoir."

Source: O'Grady, S.H., Silva Gadelica I, London, 1892, p. 352.

[66] Translation: "...and they saw enter to them, through the side of the house [i.e. by a window] three birds: a blue one, with crimson head; a crimson one with a head of green; a pied one having on his head a color of gold, and they perched upon the apple tree that stood before them. They eat an apple apiece, and warble melody sweet and harmonize, such that the sick would sleep to it. 'Those birds,' Cleena said, 'will go with you; they will give you guidance, will make you symphony and minstrelsy and until again ye reach Ireland, neither by land nor by sea shall sadness or grief afflict you.' [then:]...[with] Their sharp fast currach now they drive ahead over the great deep's convexity, and the birds struck up their chorus for them, whereat, for all they were so grieved and sad at renouncing that fruitful country out of which they were thus come, these modulations gladdened and soothed them that they became merry and of good courage all. But when they looked astern they saw not the land from which they came, for incontinently an obscuring magic veil was drawn over it..."

Source: Ibid, Vol. II, p. 396.

Location: Otherworldly birds accompany men out at sea

Audience: Teigue and his companions out at sea

Performer: three special birds from tir tairngiri ("Land of Promise")

Instrument: birds' singing

Char.'s of Music:

- 66.1: three magical birds' singing to mortals, from Otherworld
- 66.2: described as "sweet", "melodious", and very harmonious
- 66.3: birds eat apples while singing
- 66.4: birds are to guide the boat back to Ireland safely
- 66.5: birds were sent by Cleena, the chief minstrel of tir tairngiri ("Land of Promise"), and Otherworld dimension

Effects of Music:

- 66.a: comparison made to the sick sleeping to their music
- 66.b: birds' singing "gladdened" them; joyful effect
- 66.c: birds' singing "soothed" them; healing effect
- 66.d: birds' singing gave them "good courage"; morale-boosting effect on a long, demanding journey

[Number 67]

Title: "Immram Brain"  
"Voyage of Bran"

Manuscript: Critical text from Rawl. B 512, fol. 119a, Betham 145 (R.I.A.), Harleian 5280 fo. 43a, Egerton 88, 11b, LU: 121a, and YBL: col. 395.

Approximate Dating: earliest copy of the tale is from LU manuscript, dated late 11th-early 12th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Coíca rand rogab in ben a tírib ingnath for láur in tige do Bran mac Febail, arrobóí a rígtech lán de rígaib, annadfetatar can dolluid in ben, órobatar ind liss dúntai."

Source: Meyer, K., The Voyage of Bran, Volume I, London, 1895, p.3.

[67A]: Translation:

"Twas fifty quatrains the woman from unknown lands sang on the floor of the house to Bran son of Febal, when the royal house was full of kings, who knew not whence the woman had come, since the ramparts were closed."

Source: Ibid., p. 2.

[67B]: Translation:

[NOTE: this woman from an unknown dimension appears after a musical, poetic branch appears to Bran in his royal house:]

"...When they were all gathered together in the palace, they saw a woman in a strange dress in the middle of the hall. Then she sang these fifty verses to Bran, while the company listened to them, and they all saw the woman..."

Source: Jackson, K.H., A Celtic Miscellany, New York, 1971, p. 173.

Location of Music: royal house of Bran, a king  
Audience: all present at Bran's royal gathering  
Performer: an unknown woman from the Otherworld  
Instrument: vocal

Char.'s of Music:

67.1: singing by a woman from Otherworld

67.2: 50 quatrains of verse sung to Bran, to invite him there

Effects of Music:

67.a: awed the audience, as they wondered from where she came

[Number 68]

Title: "Immram Brain"  
"Voyage of Bran"

Manuscript: Critical text from Rawl.B 512, fo. 119a; Betham 145, Harleian 5280 fo. 43a, Egerton 88, 11b, LU: 121a, YBL: col. 395.

Approximate Dating: earliest copy of tale from LU: early 12th c.

Old Ir. Text:

"Imluid Bran laa n-and a óinur i comocus dia dún, cocúala a céol íarna chúl. A n-donécad tar a éissi, ba íarna chúl beus nobíth a céol. Contuil asendath frissa céol ar a bindi. A n-dofusig asa chotlud, conacca in cróib n-arggait fua bláth find ina farruth, na bu hasse etarscarath a bláthe frissin cróib ísin. Dobert íarum Bran in cróib ina láim dia ríghthig. Órobatar inna sochuidi isind ríghthig conaccatar in mnái i n-etuch ingnuth for láur in tige. Is and cachain in cóicait rand so do Bran arranchúala in slóg, ocus adchondarcatar uili in mnái."

Source: Meyer, K., The Voyage of Bran, Volume I,  
London, 1895, p.3,5.

[68A]: Translation:

"One day, in the neighborhood of his stronghold, Bran went about alone, when he heard music behind him. As often as he looked back, 'twas still behind him, the music was. At last he fell asleep at the music, such was its sweetness. When he awoke from his sleep, he saw close by him a branch of silver with white blossoms, nor was it easy to distinguish its bloom from that branch. Then Bran took the branch in his hand to his royal house...they saw a woman in strange raiment..."

Source: Ibid., p. 2.

Location of Music: Bran's courtyard

Audience: Bran himself

Performer: mysterious music; then musical branch manifests

Instrument: musical branch

Char.'s of Music:

68.1: sidhe music from Otherworld

68.2: musical branch

68.3: very sweet music from musical branch

Effects of Music:

68.a: Bran falls asleep to mysterious music

68.b: When he awakens, he finds a silver musical branch

68.c: a sidhe woman from Otherworld later appears to sing  
at his gathering

Title: "Immram Brain"  
"Voyage of Bran"

Manuscript: Critical text from Rawl.B 512, fo. 119a, Betham 145,  
Harleian 5280, fo. 43a, Egerton 88, 11b, LU: 121a,  
YBL: col. 395.

Approximate Dating: earliest copy of tale from LU: early 12th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Taitnet líga cech dathó  
trésna maige móithgretho,  
is gnáth sube, sreth imm chéul,  
isin maig tess Arggatnéul."

Source: Meyer, K., Voyage of Bran, Volume I,  
London, 1895, p.7.

[69A]: Translation: "Splendors of every color glisten  
Throughout the gentle-voiced plains.  
Joy is known, ranked around music,  
In southern Mag Argatnel."

Source: Ibid., p.6.

[69B]: Translation: "Colours of every hue gleam  
throughout the soft familiar fields;  
ranked around the music, they are  
ever joyful in the plain south of Argadnel."

Source: Jackson, K.H., A Celtic Miscellany, New York,  
1971, p. 173.

Location of Music: Otherworld (southern Mag Argatnel)

Audience: none specific

Performer: unknown, mysterious Otherworld performer

Instrument: joyful music of plains of Otherworld

Char.'s of Music:

69.1: music in the Otherworld

Effects of Music:

69.a: very joyful, clearly connected to the music in the  
Otherworld, which is assumed to be ever-present  
in that dimension.

[Number 70]

Title: "Immram Brain"  
"Voyage of Bran"

Manuscript: Critical text from Rawl. B 512 fo. 199a, Betham 145,  
Harleian 5280 fo. 43a, Egerton 88,11b, LU: 121a,  
YBL: col. 395.

Approximate Dating: earliest copy of tale from LU: early 12th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Ní bíi nach gargg fri crúais,  
acht mað céul m-bind frismben clúais."

Source: Meyer, K., The Voyage of Bran, Volume I,  
London, 1895, p.7.

[70A]: Translation:

"There is nothing rough or harsh, but sweet music striking  
on the ear."

Source: Ibid., p.6.

[70B]: Translation:

"There is no fierce harsh sound there, but sweet music striking  
the ear."

Source: Jackson, K.H., A Celtic Miscellany, New York,  
1971, p. 173.

Location of Music: Otherworld

Audience: none specifically stated

Performer: Otherworld dimension itself as inherently harmonic  
in some manner

Instrument: not stated specifically

Char.'s of Music;

70.1: Otherworld as inherently musical or harmonic in nature

70.2: This music is very sweet, not harsh or rough

Effects of Music;

70.a: very pleasant and joyful, as it is so sweet-sounding



[Number 71]

Title: "Immram Brain"  
"Voyage of Bran"

Manuscript: Critical text from Rawl. B 512 fo. 199a, Betham 145,  
Harleian 5280 fo. 43a, Egerton 88,11b, LU: 121a,  
YBL: col. 395.

Approximate Dating: earliest copy of tale from LU: early 12th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Móini, dússi cach dathó  
hi Ciúin cáine étathó,  
étsecht fri céul co m-bindi,  
óol fíno óingrindi."

Source: Meyer, K., Voyage of Bran, Volume I,  
London, 1895, p.9.

[71A]: Translation:  
"Wealth, treasures of every hue,  
Are in Ciuin, a beauty of freshness,  
Listening to sweet music,  
Drinking the best of wine."

Source: Ibid., p.8.

[71B]: Translation:  
"Riches, treasure of every colour  
are in Ciuin, have they not been found?  
Listening to sweet music,  
drinking choicest wine."

Source: Jackson, K.H., A Celtic Miscellany, New York,  
1971, p. 174.

Location of Music: Otherworld (Ciuin)

Audience: all who may visit there

Performer: none specific; Otherworld itself is implied

Instrument: not specifically stated

Char.'s of Music:

71.1: Otherworld dimension as inherently harmonic

71.2: sweet music

Effects of Music:

71:a: adds to overall joyful atmosphere there, along with  
great treasures, and the finest wine

Title: "Immram Brain"  
"Voyage of Bran"

Manuscript: Critical text from Rawl. B 512 fo. 119a, Betham 145,  
Harleian 5280 fo. 43a, Egerton 88, 11b, LU: 121a,  
YBL: col. 395.

Approximate Dating: earliest copy of tale from LU: early 12th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Imráid íarum dond licc léur  
asa comerig céit céul.  
Canid airbitiud dont slog  
tré bithu sír, nat bí tróg,  
tormaig céul co córib céit,  
ní frescet aithbe ná éc."

Source: Meyer, K., Voyage of Bran, Volume I,  
London, 1895, p.11.

[72A]: Translation:

"Then they row to the conspicuous stone,  
From which arise a hundred strains.  
It sings a strain unto the host  
Through long ages, it is not sad,  
Its music swells with choruses of hundreds--  
They look for neither decay nor death."

Source: Ibid., p. 10.

[72B]: Translation:

"Then they row to the bright stone  
from which a hundred songs arise.  
Through the long ages it sings to the host  
a melody which is not sad,  
the music swells up in choruses of hundreds,  
They do not expect decay nor death."

Source: Jackson, K.H., A Celtic Miscellany, New York,  
1971, p. 174.

Location of Music: Otherworld

Audience: all who may visit there

Performer: a bright, conspicuous stone which sings

Instrument: singing stone

Char.'s of Music:

72.1: Music in the Otherworld: seen as inherently harmonic

72.2: singing stone in Otherworld--hundreds of choruses

72.3: stone sings "through the long ages"--i.e., is eternally  
present, continuously, in the Otherworld

Effects of Music:

72.a: joyful melodies from this stone, thus contributing to  
the overall ecstatic, joyful atmosphere

[Number 73]

Title: "Imram Brain"  
"Voyage of Bran"

Manuscript: Critical text from Rawl. B 512 fo. 119a, Betham 145, harleian 5280 fo. 43a, Egerton 88, 11b, LU: 121a, YBL: col. 395.

Approximate Dating: earliest copy of tale from LU: early 12th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Má ruchúala lúad in chiúil,  
esnach énan a hImchiúin,  
dofeith banchoren di haa  
cusa cluchemag itaa."

Source: Meyer, K., Voyage of Bran, Volume I,  
London, 1895, p. 11.

[73A]: Translation:

"If he has heard the voice of the music,  
The chorus of the little birds from Imchiuin,  
A small band of women will come from a height  
To the plain of sport in which he is."

Source: Ibid., p. 10.

[73B]: Translation:

"If one has heard the sound of music,  
the song of the little birds from Imchiuin,  
a troop of women comes from the hill  
to the playing-field where it is."

Source: Jackson, K.H., A Celtic Miscellany, New York,  
1971, p. 174.

Location of Music: Otherworld (Imchiuin)

Audience: all who may visit there

Performer: birds from Imchiuin

Instrument: birds' singing in Otherworld

Char.'s of Music:

73.1: supernatural birds' singing in the Otherworld

73.2: birds' singing is connected to the appearance of a troop  
of women coming to the listener

Effects of Music:

73.a: pleasant and joyful

[Number 74]

Name of Tale: "Immram Brain"  
"The Voyage of Bran"

Manuscript: Critical text from Rawlinson B. 512 fo. 119a, Betham 145 (R.I.A.), Harleian 5280 fo. 43a, Egerton 88,11b, Lebor na hUidre, 121a, and Yellow Book of Lecan, col. 395.

Approximate Dating: earliest copy of tale from LU: early 12th c.

Old Ir. Text: "Étsecht fri céul i n-adig,  
ocus techt i n-Ildathig,  
mruig mreacht, líg úas maisse mind,  
asa taitni in nél find."

Source: Meyer, K., The Voyage of Bran, Volume I,  
London, 1895, p. 13.

[74A]: Translation:

"Listening to music at night,  
And going into Ildathach,  
A variegated land, splendor on a diadem of beauty,  
Whence the white cloud glistens."

Source: Meyer, K., Imram Brain, London, 1895, p. 12.  
(Cross and Slover translation also identical to Meyer.)

[74B]: Translation:

"Listening to music in the night,  
and going to Ildathach,  
the many-colored land,  
a brilliance with clear splendor  
from which the white cloud glistens."

Source Jackson, K.H., A Celtic Miscellany, New York,  
1971, p. 175.

Location of Music: In the courtyard of Bran's royal house

Audience: Bran and all others present in his courtyard

Performer: sidhe woman from unknown Otherworld land sings

Instrument: vocal; singing of quatrains. (poetic song)

Char.'s of Music:

74.1: music is ever-present in these lands, the sidhe woman seems to imply (Concept of inherent resonance of the Otherworld dimension)

74.2: "Ildathach", the Otherworld dimension in this instance, is described as a "variegated" or "many-coloured" land, as well as a harmonious place.

Effects of the Music:

74.a: Listening to the music seems to be connected in some manner with going to the special bright, shining Otherworld place called "Ildathach" in this example.

[Number 75]

Title: "Immram Brain"  
"Voyage of Bran"

Manuscript: Critical text from Rawl. B 512 fo. 119a, Betham 145,  
Harleian 5280 fo. 43a, Egerton 88, 11b, LU: 121a,  
YBL: col. 395.

Approximate Dating: earliest copy is from LU: early 12th c.

Old Ir. Text: "...conacci a dochum in fer isin charput íarsin  
muir. Canaid in fer hísín dano trichait rand n-aile dóu, ocus  
sloindsi  
dou ocus asbert ba hé Manannán mac Lir..."

Source: Meyer, K., Voyage of Bran, Volume I,  
London, 1895, p. 17.

[75]: Translation:

"...he saw a man in a chariot coming towards him over the sea. That  
man also sang thirty other quatrains to him...and said he was  
Manannan son of Lir..."

Source: Ibid., p. 16.

Location of Music: Manannan, from the Otherworld, comes to Bran in  
this world and sings to him

Audience: Bran

Performer: Manannan, son of Lir

Instrument: Vocal

Char.'s of Music:

- 75.1: Manannan from the Otherworld sings to Bran in this world  
(i.e., a "crossing over" of dimensions)
- 75.2: Issue of music from Otherworld coming from water/sea
- 75.3: Singing of poetic verse, from an Otherworld performer

Effects of Music:

- 75.a: Bran then goes to the Otherworld

[Number 76]

Title: "Immram Brendain"  
"Voyage of St. Brendan"

Manuscript: [Written in Ireland about 800 A.D. in Latin]:  
Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis

Approximate Dating: early 9th c. Latin manuscript

Old Ir. Text: [Same as above--O'Meara says his English translation is based on the Latin edition by Carl Selmer, Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1959.]

Source: (see above).

[76]: Translation:

"When the hour of vespers had come, all the birds in the tree chanted, as it were with one voice, beating their wings on their sides: 'A hymn is due to thee, O God, in Zion, and a vow shall be paid to you in Jerusalem.' They kept repeating this versicle for about the space of an hour. To the man of God and his companions, the chant and the sound of their wings seemed in its sweetness like a rhythmical song."

Source: O'Meara, J., The Voyage of St. Brendan, Dolmen Press, Ireland, 1985, p. 21-22.

Location of Music: Otherworld--an Island Paradise

Audience: St. Brendan and his clergy companions

Performer: birds in the tree

Instrument: birds' chanting and beating of wings

Char.'s of Music;

76.1: Music in the Otherworld

76.2: Music in a Tree--birds' chanting and beating of wings

76.3: very sweet music of the birds; like a "rhythmical song"

Effects of Music;

76.a: At hour of vespers, the birds began to chant

76.b: joyful, celebratory effect: as a hymn to God

[Number 77]

Title: "Immram Curaig Ua Corra"  
"Voyage of the ui Corra"

Manuscript: Book of Fermoy, p. 169-177.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "(Tarfás) doib aroili inis aluinn edrocht. Fer geal co mbreacradh scoth cenncorcra innti. Eoin imdha 7 beich bithailli oc cantain ceoil do cennuib na sgoth sin. Sénoir forarsaidh finnliath oc seinm cruithi isin oilen. Rochanad ceol n-amhra ba binde de cheoluibh domhuin."

Source: Stokes, W., "The Voyage of the Hui Corra", RC 14, Paris, 1893, p. 50.

[77]: Translation:

"Another beautiful bright island was shown to them. Shining grass was therein, with a variety of purple-headed flowers. Abundance of birds and ever-lovely bees singing music to the heads of those flowers. A very aged grey-haired old man playing a harp in the isle. He was chanting a wonderful melody that was the sweetest of the melodies of the world..."

Source: Ibid., p. 51.

Location of Music: Island Paradise (Otherworld implied)

Audience: Clergy

Performers: a very old man; also, lovely bees singing to flowers

Instruments: vocal chants; harp; also, bees

Char.'s of Music:

77.1: beautiful music in shining Otherworld island paradise

77.2: lovely bees singing to the heads of the flowers there

77.3: a very old man chants and plays harp; his singing "the sweetest" of the world's melodies

Effects of Music;

77.a: entertaining of the clergy by the old man and his music



[Number 78]

Title: "Immram Curaig Ua Corra"  
"Voyage of the ui Corra"

Manuscript: Book of Fermoy, p. 169-177

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text:

"Antan immorro nogluaised in ghaeth barrghar in doiri ba binne  
ina gach ceol a canadh."

Source: Stokes, W., "The Voyage of the Hui Corra", RC 14,  
Paris, 1893, p. 42.

[78]: Translation:

"Now when the wind would move the treetops of the grove sweeter was  
their song than any music."

Source: Ibid., p. 43.

Location of Music: Island Paradise

Audience: clergy

Performer: wind

Instrument: treetops

Char.'s of Music:

78.1: wind through the treetops as musical

78.2: sweet music

Effects of Music:

78.a: none specifically mentioned, but a pleasant or joyful  
effect might be inferred

[Number 79]

Title: "Immram Curaig Ua Corra"  
"Voyage of the ui Corra"

Manuscript: Book of Fermoy, p. 169-177

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text:

"Imrit rempa iarum (co tarfas) doib iarsin inis eli, 7 oenmhac (ecailse innti)...Enlaiti ailli edrochta innti, 7 ceol sirrechtach sirbinn oca chantain acu."

Source: Stokes, W., "The Voyage of the Hui Corra", RC 14,  
Paris, 1893, p. 44.

[79]: Translation:

"Then they sail on until thereafter there appeared to them another island with a son of the Church therein...Beautiful bright bird-flocks therein, and they a-singing plaintive melodious music."

Source: Ibid., p. 45.

Location of Music: Island Paradise

Audience: clergy

Performer: birdflocks

Instrument: Singing

Char.'s of Music:

79.1: Described as "plaintive, melodious" music

Effects of Music:

79.a: none mentioned specifically; however, a pleasant or joyful effect might be inferred

[Number 80]

Title: "Immram Curaig Ua Corra"  
"Voyage of the ui Corra"

Manuscript: Book of Fermoy, p. 169-177.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text:

"...7 mar rochualutar ceol na gaeithi frisin lin focertat i suan co cenn tri la 7 tri n-oidhce. Muscluit iarsin asa suan..."

Source: Stokes, W., "The Voyage of the Hui Corra", RC 14,  
Paris, 1893, p. 46.

[80]: Translation:

"...and when they heard the music of the wind against the net, they cast themselves into sleep till the end of three days and three nights. Thereafter they awake from their sleep..."

Source: Ibid., p. 47.

Location of Music: Out at sea

Audience: clergy in boat

Performer: wind against the fishing nets

Instrument: "music" of the wind

Char.'s of Music:

80.1: pleasant, and perhaps rather hypnotic or trance-like

Effects of Music:

80.a: clergy then fall asleep for three days and three nights

[Number 81]

Title: "Immram Curaig Maile Duin"  
"The Voyage of Mael Duin"

Manuscript: LU: p. 22-26; YBL: col. 340-370; Harleian 5280,  
fo. 1a-20b; Egerton, fo. 124a-b, 125a-b.

Approximate Dating: LU: late 11th-early 12th c.; YBL: 15th c.,  
Harl. 5280: 15th c.; Egerton: 15th c.

Old Ir. Text: "...Bentais íarsudiu inna hágu umaidi 7 al-lin n-  
umaide robói foraib, 7 in fogur iarum dorígensat bá céol meldach n-  
áilgen són. La sodain fochairt inna cotlud co matain arabarach."  
[Later:] "...Fosn-álaig som(in ceol) cétna, co arabárach. Tri láa  
7 téora aidchi...doib fond rían sain."

Source: Stokes, W., "The Voyage of Mael Duin", RC 9,  
Paris, 1888, p. 488-490.

[81]: Translation:

"...After this they were striking the brazen fastenings and the  
brazen net that was before them, and then the sound which they made  
was a sweet and soothing music, which sent them to sleep till the  
morrow morning." [Later in text:] "...The same melody lays them  
low then till the morrow. Three days and three nights were they in  
that wise."

Source: Ibid., p. 489.

Location of Music: out at sea

Audience: clergy

Performer: sound of hammers (?) against the fishing nets

Instrument: Inanimate object(s) in everyday life

Char.'s of Music:

81.1: Inanimate objects as "musical" in everyday life (nets)

81.2: Rhythmic sound(s) of striking the fishing nets here seems  
to be rather hypnotic or trance-like

Effects of Music:

81.a: clergy in boat put to sleep, for three days and three  
nights, by the hypnotic striking of the bronze fastenings  
on their fishing nets

[Number 82]

Title: "Immram Snedgusa 7 Maic Riagla"  
"Voyage of Snedgus"

Manuscript: YBL: col. 391-395

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text:

"Ba bind ceol ina n-en-sin ic gabail tsalm 7 cantaci ic moludh  
in Choimdhidh, ar ba henlaith muigi nime eat..."

Source: Stokes, W., "The Voyage of Snedgus and Mac Riagla",  
RC 9, Paris, 1888, p. 20.

[82]: Translation:

"Melodious was the music of those birds a-singing psalms and  
canticles, praising the Lord. For they were the birds of the Plain  
of Heaven..."

Source: Ibid., p. 21.

Location of Music: Island Paradise

Audience: clergy

Performer: birds on island paradise

Instrument: birds' singing

Char.'s of Music:

82.1: Music and Otherworld: birds singing; impression is that  
these singing birds are always present in Otherworld

82.2: singing of psalms and hymns to God

Effects of Music:

82.a: joyful, celebratory effect

[Number 83]

Title: "Aided Eochaid meic Mairid"  
"Death of Eochaid, son of Mairid"

Manuscript: LU: p.39a [Section dealing with ancient lake legends]

Approximate Dating: late 11th-early 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text:

"in tan imorro ro bátar lucht curaig Beoin oc imram forsindfairrci co cualatar célebrad aingel fón churuch. co ro iarfaig Beoán: cid diatá in célebradsa for sé. messi dogní for Líban..."

Source: O'Grady, S.H., Silva Gadelica I, London, 1892, p. 236.

[83]: Translation:

[a brief reference here to a chant sung by a mermaid under Beoan the clergyman's currach...]

"As Beoan's people therefore navigated the sea, from under the currach they heard a chant as of angels and Beoan [the cleric] questioned: 'whence this song?' 'It is I that make it,' answered Liban. [a mermaid]."

Source: Ibid. Vol. II, p. 267.

Location of Music: under a boat out at sea

Audience: Beoan and other clergy

Performer: Liban, a mermaid

Instrument: Voice--singing of a mermaid

Char.'s of Music:

83.1: supernatural music from Otherworld source

83.2: Music from a mermaid, from an undersea Otherworld dimension

83.3: described as "a chant as of angels"

Effects of Music:

83.a: caused clergy to be in awe and wonderment: made them  
curious as to from where, or whom, it was coming from

FINN/OSSIANIC CYCLE:ACALLAM NA SENORACH:

COLLECTION: "Colloquy of the Ancient Men", from  
S.H. O'Grady's SILVA GADELICA (1892)

[Number 84]

Title: Acallam na Senorach

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fol. 159. [15th c.]; tales older.

Approximate Dating: According to Myles Dillon, "the manuscripts of the Accalam are later by 300 years than the text..." [from Stories from the Accalam, D.I.A.S., Dublin, 1970, Preface comments]

Old Ir. Text: "Cascorach mac Cainchinne mac ollaman do thuaith dé danann mise ar sé ocus damhna ollaman mé fein...ocus do ghab a thimpan ocus doroine ceol ocus airhéited dóib gur chuir i suan codalta iat."

Source: O'Grady, S.H., "Colloquy with the Ancients",  
Silva Gadelica, London, 1892, p. 168.  
 Vol. I: Irish text; Vol. II: translation.

[84]: Translation:

"I am Cascorach, son of Cainchinn that is ollave to the tuatha de Danann, and am myself the makings of an ollave [i.e. an aspirant to the grade]...then he took his timpan and made for them music and minstrelsy, so that he set them slumbering off to sleep."

Source: Ibid., p.188.

Location of Music: not specifically referred to

Audience: St. Patrick and the last remaining members of the  
 Fianna

Performer: Cascorach, a sidhe musician

Instrument: timpan

Char.'s of Music:

84.1: very powerful music from timpan

84.2: played by a fairy musician

Effects of Music:

84.a: put the audience into a trance state/sleep

[Number 85]

Name of Tale: Acallam na Senorach

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fol. 159

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; tales much older.

Old Ir. Text: "Ocus do ghab a thimpán ocus do ghlés [é ocus do] sheinnesdar cairche ciuil uirre. Ocus ní [chuala]dar na cléirig a choimmbinn riam acht mad [claisceta] na canoine coimdeta ocus eadarmholad; ríge nime ocus talman. Ocus do thuit a toirrchim suain ocus codalta ar na cléirchib lasin ceol sírrechtach síde ocus ó tháirnic lais a áirphited do dhénam do iarr luach a áirfítid ar Pátraic."

Source: Ibid., p. 170.

[85]: Translation:

"He took his timpan, tuned it, and on it played a volume of melody the equal of which for sweetness (saving only the dominical canon's harmony and laudation of Heaven's King and Earth's) the clergy had never heard. Upon them fell a fit of slumber and of sleep and, when he had made an end with his minstrelsy, of Patrick he requested its recompense..."

Source: Ibid., p. 191.

Location: not sure

Audience: St. Patrick and clergy

Performer: Cascorach, a sidhe musician

Instrument: timpan

Char.'s of Music:

85.1: very sweet (second only to praise of God and the canonical  
choirs)

85.2: supernatural, as played by a sidhe musician

Effects of Music:

85.a: clergy put into a state of slumber and sleep



Name of Tale: Acallam na Senorach

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fol. 159

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; tales much older.

Old Ir. Text: "Maith an elada sin dorónais dúinn ar Brogán. Is maith imorro ar Pátraic muna biadh sianargan in brechta síde ann. Ocus ní fhuil ní bud chosmaile re ceol nime innás muna bhiadh sin ar Patraic. má atá ceol i nimh ar Broccán cid nach biadh i talmain. ocus ní cóir amlaid in táirfited do dhíchur ar Brogan. ní abraim ar Pátraic acht gan róchreidem do."

Source: Ibid., p. 171.

[86]: Translation:

"A good cast of thine art was that thou gavest us," said Brogan. 'Good indeed, it were,' said Patrick, 'but for a twang of the fairy spell that infests it; barring which nothing could more nearly than it resemble Heaven's harmony.' Says Brogan: 'if music there be in Heaven, why should there not on earth?, wherefore it is not right to banish away minstrelsy.' Patrick made answer: 'neither say I any such thing, but merely inculcate that we must not be inordinately addicted to it.'"

Source: Ibid., p. 191.

Location of Music: Under trees, with St. Patrick and clergy

Audience: St. Patrick and other clergy present

Performer: Cascorach, a sidhe harper

Instrument: timpan

Char.'s of Music:

86.1: Music that has "a twang of the fairy spell" to it

86.2: Is so wonderful, that is is compared nearly matching Heaven's harmony itself.

86.3: Music is played by a sidhe musician

Effects of Music:

86.a: Fear: Caused a lively debate among the clergy about the power of this fairy music--St. Patrick ends up "warning" the others about it, yet saying that he did not want to eliminate minstrelsy entirely.

[Number 87]

Name of Tale: Acallam na Senorach

Manuscripts: Book of Lismore, fol. 159

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; tales much older.

Old Ir. Text: "Is ann sin ro sheinnesdar Cascorach a thimpan<sup>án</sup> agus  
tuc nuallargan síde fuirri. Agus is amlaid innister co coidéldais  
fir ghonta risin ceol sírrechtach síde dorigne dóib. tucad iarum  
seoit agus máine don airffídech..."

Source: Ibid., p. 188.

[87]: Translation:

"Cascorach played his timpan, inspiring it with a certain fairy  
cadence; whence it is reported that to the marvellous magic music  
which he made for them, wounded men would have slept. Which done,  
jewels and things of price were given to the minstrel..."

Source: Ibid., p. 213.

Location of Music: not sure

Audience: St. Patrick and the clergy

Performer: Cascorach, a sidhe musician

Instrument: timpan

Char.'s of Music;

87.1: "magic music"; inspired by a "fairy cadence", is enchanting

Effects of Music;

87.a: Music such as to make wounded men sleep; a healing effect  
is implied.

87.b: musician is paid very well: "jewels and things of price"  
were given to Cascorach

[Number 88]

Name of Tale: Acallam na Senorach

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fol. 159

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; tales much older.

Old Ir. Text: "...go cualadar in fogar ocus in cairche ciuil chucua ó es ruaid mheic Mhodairn. ocus do thréicfed nech ilcheola in domain ar in ceol sin. ocus cuiritseom na cruite i cernaib na colbhad ocus tecait uile amach...Uainebhu[ide a sid D]uiri bhuide andes ó thuinn Chlíod[na ocus énlaithe] tíre tarrngaire ina farrad. ocus ba [háirfitech] tíre tarrngaire uile í. ocus a mbliadna is [léi techt] d'innsaigid in tsída so ocus bliadain gacha sída ar an ingen....ro ghab Cascorach a thimpan ocus gach adhbann ro sheinnea ro ghabdais in énlaithe leis. is mór gceol do chualamar ar Caeilte ocus ní Chualamar ceol a chommaith sin."

Source: Ibid., p. 223.

[88]: Translation:

"...they heard a sound, a gush of music, draw near from the water of Assaroe: melody for sake of which one would have abandoned the whole world's various strains...`it was Uainebhuidhe out of the sidh of Dorn buidhe from Cleena's Wave in the south, and with her the birds of the land of promise, she being minstrel of that entire country. Now is her turn to visit this sidh, and every year she takes some other one' [said the sidhe-folk to Caeilte]... [Then] Cascorach handled his timpan, and to every piece that he played the birds sang him an accompaniment. `Many's the music we have heard,' Caeilte said, `but music so good as that, never.'"

Source: Ibid., p. 253.

[88: con'd]:

[88: con'd:]

Location of Music: the south of Ireland, (Assaroe): an area seen as especially enchanting

Audience: Cailte and the other older remaining Fianna warriors are reflecting on the past re: Wave of Assaroe

Performers: A wave of music (from tir tairrngaire); and Cascorach, Uainebhuidhe, minstrel of Tir Tarrngaire, and her sidhe birds

Instrument: timpan, and a wave of sidhe music from Assaroe

#### Char.'s of Music:

- 88.1: Wave of Assaroe: Musical wave appears "from out of nowhere"
- 88.2: Wave of Assaroe: very beautiful music, described as better than the whole world's various strains
- 88.3: Wave of Assaroe: is sidhe music, from side of Dorn buidhe in the south of Ireland
- 88.4: Wave of Assaroe: associated with the birds from the land of promise (tir tairrngaire); their music always present
- 88.5: Concept of the minstrel of tir tairrngaire (Uainebhuidhe) "rotating" her music from side to side, each year
- 88.6: Cascorach: also plays "beautiful" timpan music

#### Effects of Music:

- 88.a: Cailte comments on how beautiful it was, saying that they had never heard music that good before
- 88.b: Wave of Assaroe sidhe music is heard first, then, Cascorach picks up his timpan and plays for everyone present. (Perhaps a musical "inspiration" from Assaroe?)
- 88.c: Cascorach and the supernatural birds from tir tairrngaire, the Land of Promise, join in a "duet" together; a talented mortal combines his skill with sidhe birds.

[Number 89]

Name of Tale: Acallam na Senorach

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fol. 159

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; tales much older.

Old Ir. Text: "ascaid uaimse dhóib ar Bodhb derg; airpéit[idh maith atá acum .i.] fer tuinne mac Troghainn a ainm. oculus ruidhb arna ruachtad oculus mná re gúrlámnad oculus mílid arna mochledrad do choidéldáis frisin ceol sirrechtach doghní [ms. doní]..."

Source: Ibid., p. 103

[89]: Translation: [A gift to the three sons of King Lughaid:]

"A gift from me to them," said Bodhb Derg: "a good minstrel that I have (Fer-tuinne mac Trogain is his name) and though saws were being plied where there were women in sharpest pains of childbirth, and brave men that were wounded early in the day, nevertheless would such [people] sleep to the fitful melody that he makes."

Source: Ibid., p. 111

Location of Music: Munster: Bodhb Derg as king of fairies

Audience: three sons of King Lughaid

Performer: A very good mortal minstrel named Fer-tuinne mac Trogain, of Munster.

Instrument: timpan (implied)

Char.'s of Music:

89.1: trance-like characteristic implied to his music

89.2: Fer-tuinne as a powerful Munster sidhe musician

89.3: Concept of a sidhe musician being given to mortals as "a gift", i.e., as barter or exchange, in gratitude

Effects of Music:

89.a: Bodhb Derg says that the music is so trance-like and beautiful, that he says everyone would be put to sleep

89.b: Bodhb claims it could also put women in pangs of childbirth to sleep

89.c: Bodhb further says it could put wounded men to sleep

[Number 90]

Name of Tale: Acallam na Senorach

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fol. 159

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; tales much older.

Old Ir. Text: "Do bámar i farrad Finn. idir chrota is shléib ban finn co cualamar ceol gan chol. ar an bfot inár bfarrod do bámar ag éisdecht ris. a cheol nír [ba fáth] néisliis, beg nachar chuir sinn n[ár suan]. in ceol sirrechtach sírbhuan ann sinn atbert [co nglaine]. Fionn mac Cumaille almaine, `canas ticise a fir bhic. sheinnios in cruit co caeimglic tánacas a síd ban fionn...Cetra duirn i náirde in fhir. trí duirn in a chruit chaeimdhil, mor tairm na bláithe buige. binn fogar na caemchruite. Doratad chuige maille. cúic óirfitig na féinne; cur fhoglaimeit ceol síde. thall ó Chnáí go caeimlíne."

Source: Ibid., 108.

[90]: Translation:

"...We were, along with Finn, betwixt the crota and Slievenaman; when on the green bank near beside us there we heard a perfect music. To him we listened then--his melody admitted not of indifference--it lacked but little that the swelling music, well sustained, had lulled us all to sleep. Cumaille's son Finn of Almha spoke out clearly then and said: `whence comest thou, small man, that with a touch so smooth and deft playest the harp?' `Out of Slievenaman come I'...Four fists were in the stature of the man, three in his harp so mild and dear: full-volumed was the sound of the soft delicate instrument, sweet the outpourings of his little harp. The five musicians of the Fianna were in a body brought to him; so that in those yonder parts from Cnu in gentle wise we learned a fairy music."

Source: Ibid., p. 116.

Location of Music: Music heard on green bank near Slievenaman,  
a mountain

Audience: Caeilte and the other Fianna warriors

Performer: Cnu Deroil, a wee sidhe man

Instrument: a little harp (cruitt)

Char.'s of Music:

90.1: soft, delicate, sweet

90.2: a "perfect" music; was sidhe music

90.3: played by a sidhe musician who lives within a mountain

Effects of Music:

90.a: lulled all present to sleep

90.b: Cnu Deroil became the teacher of the five musicians of  
the Fianna

[Number 91]

Name of Tale: Acallam na Senorach

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fol. 159

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; tales much older.

Old Ir. Text: "ocus Aillén mac Midhna do tuathaib dé denann do tighedh ó charn Fhinnachaid atuid co Temraig. oculus is amlaid ticed oculus timpán ciuil ina láim oculus do chodlad gach nech atcluined é. oculus do chuireadh ainnséin cairche teined as a bheol. oculus ticedh co Temraig i líthlaithe na Samhna gacha bliadna oculus do sheinndh a thimpán oculus do Chodladáis cách risin ceol síde dogníodh [ms. doníth]. oculus do shéidedh a anáil fón cairche teined oculus no loiscedh Temair cona turrscar gacha bliadna amlaid sin fri ré trí mbliadan fichet."

Source: Ibid., p. 130.

[91]: Translation: [Caeilte says:]

"For it was Aillen mac Midhna of the Tuatha de Danann that out of side Finnachaidh to the northward used to come to Tara: the manner of his coming being with a musical timpan in his hand, which whenever any heard he would at once sleep. Then, all being lulled thus, out of his mouth Aillen would emit a blast of fire. It was on the solemn Samhain-day he came in every year, played his timpan, and to the fairy music that he made all hands would fall asleep. With his breath he used to blow up the flame and so, during a three-and-twenty years' spell, yearly burnt up Tara with all her gear."

Source: Ibid., p. 142.

Location of Music: Tara, center of Kingship

Audience: All present at Tara for Samhain feast

Performer: Aillen mac Midhna of the Tuatha de Danann

Instrument: timpan

Char.'s of Music:

91.1: fairy music; his playing 'enchanting', esp. powerful

Effects of Music:

91.a: All who heard his music could not help falling asleep; were "lulled" to sleep against their own will

91.b: Samhain "ritual" involving fire and music, at Tara; is destructive in its effects

91.c: Music as a "deceptive maneuver", while Aillen burns Tara

[Number 92]

Name of Tale: Acallam na Senorach

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fol. 159

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; tales much older.

Old Ir. Text: "Is ann sin adracht rí Eirenn re beinn mbláthcháin mbuabaill do bí in a láim ocus adubairt: `da bfhaghainn agaib a fhira Eirenn nech do choimétfadh Temair go tráth éirge do ló amárach gan a loscad d'Aillén mac Midna do bherainn a dhúthchas do gémad beg gémad móre é. do éistefar imorro fir Eirenn co táí tostadhach ris sin. uair no choidéldáis mná co nidhnaib ocus laeich ledartha [ms. leadairthe] risin ceol sírrechtach síde ocus risin ngadán nglésta nguithbinn do Chanadh in fer soinemail síde no loiscedh Temair gacha bliadna..."

Source: Ibid., p. 131.

[92]: Translation:

"Then with a smooth and polished drinking horn that was in his hand the king of Ireland stood up and said: `if, men of Ireland, I might find with you one that until the point of rising day upon the morrow, should preserve Tara that she be not burnt by Aillen mac Midhna, his rightful heritage, (were the same much or were it little) I would bestow on him.' To this the men of Erin listened mute and silent however, for they knew that at the plaintive fairy strain and at the subtle sweet-voiced notes produced by the wondrous elfin man that yearly used to burn Tara..."

Source: Ibid., p. 143.

Location of Music: Tara

Audience: All present at Tara

Performer: Aillen mac Midhna, of the Tuatha de Danann

Instrument: timpan

Char.'s of Music:

92.1: sweet music, a "plaintive strain"; very compelling  
(i.e. it is sidhe music, not that of mortals)

Effects of Music:

92.a: all who hear it are irresistibly lulled to sleep

92.b: it is part of a yearly Samhain ritual at Tara

92.c: it is a "deceptive maneuver" to make everyone fall asleep, while Aillen "burns" Tara each Samhain



[Number 93]

Name of Tale: Acallam na Senorach

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fol. 159

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; tales much older.

Old Ir. Text: "ocus nír chian do go cuala in ceol sírrechtach. oculus tuc slinn na sleige oculus a forgráin re a édan. oculus gabaid Aillén ac seinm a thimpáin. nó gur chuir cách ina codlad mar do chlecht. oculus léidid iar sin a chairce teined as a bheol do loscad na Temrach. oculus chuirios Fionn..."

Source: Ibid., p. 132

[93]: Translation: [Finn goes to save Tara from deadly melodies:]

"...He [Finn] was not long before he heard a plaintive strain, and to his forehead he held the flat of the spear-head with its dire energy. Aillen began and played his timpan; he had lulled everyone else to sleep, and then to consume Tara emitted from his mouth his blast of fire. But to this Finn opposed..."

Source: Ibid., p. 144.

Location of Music: Tara, center of Kingship

Audience: All present at Tara, at yearly Samhain feast

Performer: Aillen mac Midhna of the Tuatha de Danann

Instrument: timpan

Char.'s of Music:

93.1: sweet, plaintive fairy music; compelling

Effects of Music:

93.a: effectively lulls everyone except Finn to sleep

93.b: Music as part of a yearly Samhain feast at Tara

93.c: an attempted "deceptive maneuver" that in this case did not work, thanks to Finn's strategy to save Tara

[Number 94]

Name of Tale: Acallam na Senorach

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fol. 159.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; tales much older.

Old Ir. Text: "...ocus ro seinnit leo timpána; téitbhinne ocus cruite nuaibhinne náithédacha có tarr[a] in tech ina chairche chiuil."

Source: Ibid., p. 177.

[94]: Translation: [Ciabhan, son of Eochaid, king of Ulidia, goes to the coast, and sees two young warriors, strangers in the area, who appear to be lost. He offers to help them, and gets on board their ship. They go out to sea on a rather 'hair-raising' journey; they meet up with a grey horse with a golden bridle and eventually land on the beach of "the Land of Promise." All three dismount and go to the "loch of the pygmies" and go to Manannan's cathair or stone fort, to a large banquetting hall. They are served food and drink and then are entertained by the sidhe folk:]

"...sweet-stringed timpani were played by them, and most melodious dulcet-chorded [i.e. nine-stringed] harps, until the whole house was flooded with music."

Source: Ibid., p. 200.

Location of Music: Manannan's fort in the Land of Promise

Audience: Ciabhan, and two young warriors

Performer: sidhe folk in Manannan's banquetting hall

Instrument: timpani (timpana) and harps (cruite)

Char.'s of Music:

94.1: sweet, melodious harp music

94.2: sidhe music, played by sidhe musicians in Land of Promise

Effects of Music:

94.a: the "whole house was flooded with music"

[Number 95]

Name of Tale: Acallam na Senorach

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fol. 159.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; tales much older.

Old Ir. Text: "cáit a bfuil in ferann sin ar Pátraic. idir Albain agus Cruithentuaith [ms. tuath] ar Caeilte. agus trí catha na féinne téighmísne laithe mís trogain risaráidter in lugnasadh. agus do gheibmís ár lórdaethain selga ann nó go ngairidh in cháid do barraib bilead i nEirinn. agus binne iná gach ceol éisdecht re binnghotaib a hénlaith ag éirge do thonnaib agus daireraib na hinnse..."

Source: Ibid., p. 101.

[95]: Translation: "Patrick enquired of Caeilte: 'where is that land?' [Caeilte] 'Between Scotland and Pictland: on the first day of the trogan month which is called 'lughnasdh' we, to the number of the Fianna's three battalions, practised to repair thithir and there have our fill of hunting until such time as from the tree tops the cuckoo(s) would call in Ireland. More melodious than all music whatsoever it was to give ear to the voices of the birds...' [After which, the bands of Fianna warriors would go to Ireland.]

Source: Ibid., p. 109.

Location of Music: "between Scotland and Pictland"

Audience: the Fianna warriors who were hunting there

Performer: the cuckoo birds

Instrument: birds' "singing"/warbling

Char.'s of Music:

95.1: very melodious cuckoos' singing

Effects of Music:

95.a: would serve as a "summons" to all of the Fianna warriors who were hunting, that the hunting season was now over and that it was time to return to Ireland

95.b: occurs as part of the Lugnasadh festival season (August 1)

[Number 96]

Name of Tale: Acallam na Senorach

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fol. 159

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; tales much older.

Old Ir. Text: "Trí ceola ón trí ceola. ac rígaib seghda ar sodhain; ceol crot ceol timpan co mblaid. dórd Fir Tuinne meic Troghain."

Source: Ibid., 104.

[96]: Translation: [Caeilte says to St. Patrick:]

"Three sorts of music, and O music of three kinds, that comely kings enjoyed! Music of harps, melody of timpan, [and the] humming of Trogan's son Fer-tuinne."

Source: Ibid., p. 112.

Location of Music: kings' quarters

Audience: the kings and all of their company

Performer: harpists, and "hummers" (cronan snagach)

Instrument: harps, (crot) timpan, (timpan) and human voice

Char.'s of Music:

96.1: happy, joyful music, played for kings

Effects of Music:

96.a: entertainment of the king and his company; joyful

[Number 97]

Title: Acallam na Senorach

Manuscript: Laud 610 (Bodleian Library Oxford), fo. 145b1

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; tales much older.

Old Ir. Text:

..."Ocus do eirig co moch arnamairech, 7 dochuaid co mullach in chairnn, 7 ro bói ac sefnad 7 ac sírséinm a timpain co fuined nell nona. Ocus amal do bói adchonnairc na tri coin chuide co ro laigset ina fiadhnaissi ic eistecht in chéoil...Ocus tainic Cascorach reime arnamairech conice in carnn cetna, 7 ro indill a muintir imon carnn, 7 doriachtadur na coin conice in carnn, 7 ro laigset ara rigthib oc eistecht rissin ceol..."

Source: Stokes, W., and Windisch, E., Irische Texte IV, Part 1, Leipzig, 1900, p. 215.

[97] Translation: [Cascorach plays his harp to assist the community in getting rid of menacing wolves...]

..."He got up early next day and went to the top of the cairn, and was playing and continually thrumming his lute till the clouds of evening came down. And as he was there, he saw three wolves coming towards him, and they lay down before him and listened to the music...[and they went away from him at the end of the day.]...Cascorach came next day to the same cairn, and posted his followers round the cairn, and the wolves arrived at the cairn, and lay down on their forelegs listening to the music..."

Source: Jackson, K.H., A Celtic Miscellany, London, 1971, p. 163.

Location of Music: on top of a grave

Audience: three wolves

Performer: Cascorach, a sidhe musician

Instrument: harp (timpain)

Char.'s of Music:

97.1: peaceful timpan music to calm wild wolves

Effects of Music:

97.a: wild wolves effectively pacified; sit on their forelegs listening to Cascorach's music.

SELECTED EARLY IRISH POETRY: SECULAR AND MONASTIC, 7TH-12TH c.

[Number 98]

Title: "The Yew of the Disputing Sons"Manuscript: LL: facs. p. 27a35-b52.Approximate Dating: 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "...Clúain ro gabad oc Ailill sund dá echaib ina ferund;...Olc lasin áes sídi seng tíachtain, forro ina ferand: mildís in fér cach samna...Atát oc indred ind féoir is `car n-ithi dar n-amdeoin ac cantain chéoil sídi chain fris cotéltais síl Adaim.'...`Má chanait céoil sídi saímn,' ar Ferches mac Commáin, `ná beram céim secha sain cor legam ceir `nar Cluasaib.' Ni chualatar in ceol cain o thucsat céir `na clúasaib, co facca cách a chéili: rapa phrapp in choméirgi.'"

Source: Dillon, M., "The Yew of the Disputing Sons,"  
Eriu 14, Dublin, 1946, p. 156-7.

[98]: Translation:

"...Ailill took a meadow here in his territory for his horses...The slender elves did not like the intrusion of their territory: they used to destroy the grass every Samain...`They are trampling the grass and eating our substance in our despite, singing lovely elfin music which would make the race of Adam sleep.' [said Ailill]. `If they are singing a soft elfin strain,' said Ferchess son of Comman, `let us go no farther until we put melted wax in our ears.' They did not hear the lovely music when they had put wax in their ears, and each beheld the other: it was a sudden encounter..."

Source: Ibid., p. 161.

Location of Music: in a meadowAudience: Ferchess and AilillPerformer: sidhe beings (translator here calls "elves")Instrument: singing; vocal.Char.'s of Music:98.1: sidhe music sung to two mortals in a meadow

98.2: described as "lovely elfin music"; a "soft elfin strain"

Effects of Music:

98.a: their music was so beautiful, as to "make the race of Adam sleep"; so, Ferchess and Ailill put melted wax in their ears to avoid this, thus "outwitting" the elves.

[Number 99]

Title: "King and Hermit"

Manuscript: Harl. 5280, fo. 42b (16th c. manuscript)

Approximate Dating of poem: late 9th c.--Murphy

Old Ir. Text: (As given by Murphy; none provided by K. Meyer).

GUAIRE: `A Marbain, a dithrubaig, cid na cotlai for  
colcaid?....'

MARBAN: ...Mét mo boithe--bec nád bec,  
baile sétae sognath.  
Canaid sian mbinn día beinn  
ben a lleinn co londath...

...Céola ferán  
mbruinne forglan,  
forom ndil;  
dordán smálcha  
caíne gnáthcha  
úas mo thig...

Source: Murphy, Gerard, Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956,  
p. 10-11; 16-17. (1970 ed.)

[99]: Translations:

[Marban, brother of King Guaire of Connacht in the seventh century, had renounced the life of a warrior-prince for that of a hermit. The king endeavored to persuade his brother to return to his court, when the following colloquy took place between them:]

KING: `Hermit Marban, why do you not sleep upon a bed?'  
(Murphy, p.11)

`Why, hermit, Marban, sleepest thou not upon  
a feather quilt?' (K. Meyer, p.50)

MARBAN: ...`The size of my hut--small yet not small--  
a homestead with familiar paths. A woman in  
blackbird-coloured cloak sings a pleasant  
song from its gable.' (Murphy, p.11)

...`The size of my shieling tiny, not too tiny,  
Many are its familiar paths;  
from its gable a sweet strain sings  
A she-bird in her cloak of the ousel's hue.'  
(K. Meyer, p. 50)

...`Notes of gleaming-breasted pigeons (a beloved  
movement); the song of a pleasant constant thrush  
above my house'... (Murphy, p. 17)

...`The music of the bright red-breasted men,  
A lovely movement!  
The strain of the thrush, familiar cuckoos  
Above my house'... (K. Meyer, p. 50)

Sources: (for English translations):

Meyer, K., Ancient Irish Poetry, London, 1911, p. 50-51.

Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 10-11,  
16-17. (1970 ed.)

Location of Music: birds around a hermit's hut

Audience: Marban, the hermit

Performer: birds

Instrument: "singing" of the birds in and around his hut

Char.'s of Music:

99.1: birds sing sweet strains on top of hermit's hut

99.2: music of red birds ("pigeons", acc. to Murphy) as being a  
musical movement, like a song, to the hermit.

Effects of Music:

99.a: gives great joy overall to his choice of hermit lifestyle.



Title: "King and Hermit"

Manuscript: Harl. 5280, fo.42b (approx. 16th c. manuscript)

Approximate Dating: "9th c."-G. Murphy; "10th c."-K. Meyer

Old Ir. Text: Tellinn, cÍarainn,  
cerdán cruinne,  
crónán séim;  
gigrainne, cadain,  
gair ré samain,  
seinm ngairb chéir...

Caínciu gestlach,  
druí donn desclach,  
don chraib chuill;  
cochuill alaid  
snaic ar daraig,  
aidbli druing.

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 16-17.

[100]: Translation:

MARBAN: ...Bees, chafers (restricted humming, tenuous  
buzz); barnacle geese, brent geese, shortly  
before Samain (music of a dark wild one)...  
(Murphy, p.17)

Swarms of bees and chafers, the little  
musicians of the world,  
A gentle chorus:  
Wild geese and ducks, shortly before summer's end,  
The music of the dark torrent. (K. Meyer, p. 51)

A nimble linnet (?); active brown wizzard,  
from the hazel bough; there with pied plumage  
are woodpeckers--vast flocks. (Murphy, p. 17)

An active songster, a lively wren  
From the hazel-bough,  
Beautiful hooded birds, woodpeckers,  
A vast multitude!" (K. Meyer, p. 51)

Location of Music: around a hermit's hut

Audience: the hermit Marban

Performer: bees, birds, geese, ducks, wrens.

Instrument: singing "voices" of bees, birds, geese, etc.

Char.'s of Music:

100.1: "gentle" chorus of bees and chafers

100.2: "music of the dark torrent": re: comparison to Samhain time

Effects of Music:

100.a: their "music" adds much joy and enthusiasm for the  
hermit and his chosen hermit lifestyle.

Title: "King and Hermit"

Manuscript: Harl. 5280; fo.42b (16th c. manuscript)

Approximate Dating: "9th c."-G. Murphy; "10th c."-K. Meyer

Old Ir. Text:

Tecat caí<sup>1</sup>nfinn,  
corra, faí<sup>1</sup>linn;  
fos-cain cúan;  
ní céol ndogra  
cerca odra  
a fráech rúad.

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956,  
p. 16-17. (1970 ed.)

[101]: Translation:

MARBAN: ...Fair white birds come, herons, gulls--the sea  
sings to them; not mournful is the music  
made by dun grouse from russet heather.  
(Murphy, p. 16-17)

...Fair white birds come, herons, seagulls,  
The cuckoo sings between--  
No mournful music! dun deathpoults  
Out of the russet heather. (K. Meyer, p. 51)

Location of Music: non-specific.

Audience: hermit Marvan

Performer: birds: herons, seagulls, cuckoos.

Instrument: birds' "voices"/"songs"

Char.'s of Music:

101.1: "no mournful music"--i.e., the birds' singing is joyful

Effects of Music;

none specifically stated.

[Number 102]

Title: "King and Hermit"

Manuscript: Harl. 5280, fo.42b (16th c. manuscript)

Approximate Dating: "9th c."-G. Murphy; "10th c."-K. Meyer

Old Ir. Text:

Fogur gaíthe  
fri fid fleascach,  
forglas néol;  
essa aba;  
esnad ala;  
álainn céol.

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956,  
p. 16. (1970 ed.)

[102]: Translation:

MARBAN:...The wind's voice against a branchy wood, on  
a day of grey cloud; cascades in a river,  
roar of rock: delightful music!  
(Murphy, p. 17)

The voice of the wind against the branchy wood  
Upon the deep-blue sky:  
Falls of the river, the note of the swan,  
Delicious music!...  
(Meyer, p. 50-51.)

Location of Music: woodland scene near river

Audience: hermit Marban

Performer: "voice" of the wind against the wood; river; swan.

Instrument: songs of the birds, falls of the river, voice of wind.

Char.'s of Music:

102.1: "delicious", "delightful" music: of falls of river, note of  
the swan.

Effects of Music:

102.a: Brings joy and delight to the hermit, in his ascetic,  
severe monastic lifestyle

[Number 103]

Title: "King and Hermit"

Manuscript: Harl. 5280, fo.42b (16th c. manuscript)

Approximate Dating: "9th c."-G.Murphy; "10th c."-K. Meyer

Old Ir. Text:       Caíni ailmi  
                      ardom-peitet,  
                      ní íar n-a creic:  
                      do Chríst, cech than,  
                      ní mesa dam  
                      oldás deit.

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p.18,  
(1970 ed.)

[103] Translation:

"Beautiful are the pines which make music for me,  
unhired; through Christ, I am no worse off at any  
time than you."       (Murphy, p. 19)

Location of Music: Pines surrounding a hermit's hut

Audience: Marban, a hermit

Performer: wind between the pine trees

Instrument: tree branches

Char.'s of Music:

103.1: described as "beautiful"

Effects of Music:

103.a: makes the hermit feel as though he, like the pines, "makes  
music" for Christ, "unhired", i.e., as a service to  
God.

[Number 104]

Title: "The Scribe in the Woods"

Manuscript: St. Gall MS. 904, p.203-4. (15th c. manuscript)

Approximate Dating: "early 9th c." poem-G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text:

Dom-farcai fidbaide fáil  
fom-chain loíd luin, lúad nād céil;  
hūas mo lebrán, ind línech,  
fom-chain trírech inna n-én.

Fomm-chain coí menn, medair mass,  
hi mbrot glass de dingnaib doss.  
Debrath! nom-Choimmdiu-coíma:  
caín-scríbaimm fo roída ross.

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p.4-5,  
(1970 ed.)

[104]: Translation:

A hedge of trees overlooks me; a blackbird's  
lay sings to me (an announcement which I  
shall not conceal); above my lined book the  
birds' chanting sings to me.

A clear-voiced cuckoo sings to me (goodly  
utterance) in a grey cloak from bush  
fortresses. The Lord is indeed good to  
me: well do I write beneath a forest of  
woodland.

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: trees above a hermit's hut

Audience: hermit

Performer: cuckoo, blackbird

Instrument: birds' singing

Char.'s of Music:

104.1: "clear-voiced" cuckoo sings; is also described as  
"chanting"

Effects of Music:

104.a: hermit feels grateful that "the Lord has been good to me",  
as he listens to the birds' singing

[Number 105]

Title: "The Bell"

Manuscript: Trinity College H.2.12, section 8, 13b 13."  
(15th c. manuscript)

Approximate Dating: This poem "is cited by a 9th or 10th c.  
metrist"--(G. Murphy.)

Old Ir. Text:

Clocán binn  
benar i n-aidchi gaíthe:  
ba ferr lim dul ina dáil  
indás i ndáil mná baíthe.

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 4-5,  
(1970 ed.)

[105] Translation:

Bell of pleasant sound ringing  
on a windy night: I should  
prefer to tryst with it to  
trysting with a wanton woman.

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: none specific

Audience: Christian hermit in his monastic environment

Performer: the wind, which rings the bell

Instrument: bell

Char.'s of Music:

105.1: "pleasant"

Effects of Music:

none specific.

[Number 106]

Title: "The Blackbird by Belfast Loch"

Manuscript: Book of Ballymote, p. 295, 1.5 (B)  
(15th c. manuscript)

Approximate Dating: early 9th c. poem--G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text:

... "Int é n bec  
ro léic feit  
do rinn guip  
glanbuidi:  
fo-ceird faíd  
ós Loch Laíg  
lon do chraib  
charnbuidi."...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p.6-7,  
(1970 ed.)

[106] Translation:

... "The little bird which  
has whistled from the end of a  
bright-yellow bill:  
it utters a note above Belfast Loch--  
a blackbird form a yellow-heaped  
branch..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: above a loch

Audience: a hermit

Performer: a blackbird

Instrument: its singing voice

Char.'s of Music:

106.1: birds' singing described as "whistling"

Effects of Music:

none specific.

[Number 107]

Title: "The Blackbird Calling From the Willow"

Manuscripts: H.2.12, section 8, p.14, l. 30 (H); Book of Ballymote 303 a 44 and also 298 b 20; Laud 610, 90, col. 2, l. 14. ("Scribes of these manuscripts belong to the late 14th and the 15th c.'s."--G. Murphy)

Approximate Dating: "probably composed in the 9th c."--G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text:

... "Int é<sup>n</sup> gaires asin tsail  
 álainn guilbnén as glan gair:  
 rinn binn buide fir duib druin:  
 cas cor cuirther, guth ind luin..."

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 6-7, (1970 ed.)

[107] Translation:

... "The bird which calls from the willow:  
 beautiful beaklet of clear note:  
 musical yellow bill of a firm black lad:  
 lively the tune that is played,  
 the blackbird's voice..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: from a willow tree

Audience: a hermit

Performer: blackbird

Instrument: birds' singing voice

Char.'s of Music:

107.1: "clear", "musical", "lively"

Effects of Music:

none specific.



[Number 108]

Title: "An Exile's Dream" (ascribed to St. Colum Cille,  
while in Scotland, reflecting on  
his memories in Ireland.)

Manuscripts: R.I.A. MS. 23 N 10, p.91; R.I.A. MS. B IV 2, f.141a;  
and Brussels MS. 5100-4, p.41.  
("16th c." manuscripts"-- G. Murphy)

Approximate Dating: The poem is attributed to the "late 10th-early  
11th c."--G. Murphy.

Old Ir. Text: ...Go Mag nÉolarig,  
sech Beinn Foibne,  
tar Loch Febail,  
airm i cluinfinn cuibdius cubaid  
ac na elaib...

...Fúaim na gaíthe frisín leman ardon-peite,  
golgaire in luin léith co n-aite  
iar mbéim eite...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p.66-9,  
(1970 ed.)

[108] Translation:

...To Mag nEolairg, by Benevenagh, across Lough  
Foyle, where I might hear tuneful music  
from the swans...

...The sound of the wind in the elm making music  
for us, and the startled cry of the pleasant  
grey blackbird when she has clapped  
her wings...

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: a plain by a loch; and an elm tree

Audience: hermit St. Columcille

Performers: swans (he conjectures), and the wind through elm tree

Instruments: swans' "voices" and an elm tree

Char.'s of Music:

108.1: "tuneful" music of the swans

Effects of Music:

none specific.

Title: "The Island Protected By a Bridge of Glass"  
 --a verse recension of the tale Immram Curaig  
Maile Duin, ed. by A.G. Van Hamel in his Immrama,  
 1941, p. 63.

Manuscript: YBL col. 379 (15th c.); and also in  
 Harl. 5280, fo. 6v. (late 15th c.)

Approximate Dating: "10th century" poem--G. Murphy.

Old Ir. Text: ...Luidi úadaib, is dúnaís a ndún saér subach:  
 (ba forbrech brig) céol caín cubaid.

...Doda-rálaig a clas chéolda (cruth ar-rálad);  
 do-luid cucu ben cen ruca ara bárach.

...Bátar samlaid, fond óenchuma, co tres laithe;  
 arus-peited céol, cen fleitech,  
 na mná maithe...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 102-3,  
 (1970 ed.)

[109] Translation:

...She went from them and closed the noble pleasant  
 fort: her net\*, manifesting mighty power,  
 chanted good harmonious music.

...Her musical choir lulled them to sleep, as had  
 been enjoined. Next day she came to them--a  
 woman unshamed.

...Thus they were, in the same condition, till the  
 third day; the noble woman's music used to play  
 for them, but no banqueting hall was seen...

\*NOTE: "from the prose account, we learn that there was a brazen  
 net hanging over the pillars of the door" (G. Murphy)

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: An island (later realized to be supernatural,  
 from the Otherworld) that the cleric Mael  
 Duin and his men encounter while at sea

Audience: cleric Mael Duin and his men

Performer: Otherworld source, as the net "chants" on its own

Instrument: a brazen net

Char.'s of Music:

109.1: "good harmonious" music, net "manifesting mighty power"

Effects of Music:

109.a: puts all in boat to sleep for three days, it "lulled"  
 them to sleep.

[Number 110]

Title: "Loeg's Description to Cu Chulainn of Labraid's Home  
in Mag Mell"

Manuscript: From Serglige Con Culainn, in T.C.D. MS. H.4.22, as  
shown by Myles Dillon to derive from Lebor na Huidre  
(a late 11th-early 12th c. manuscript)

Approximate Dating: Re: the dating of the tale, "the dates vary  
from the ninth to the late eleventh century".  
(G. Murphy)

Old Ir. Text: A-tát arin dorus sair  
tri bile do chorcorglain  
dǫa ngair in énlaithe búan bláith  
don macraid assin rígráith.

A-tā crand i ndorus liss  
(ní héitig cocetul friss),  
crand airgit ris tatin grían  
(cosmail fri hór a roníam).

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 108-9,  
(1970 ed.)

[110] Translation: To the east, three trees of red glass stand  
before the entrance, and from them sleek  
never-ceasing birds call to the young  
folk from the royal fort.

There is a tree before the enclosure (to sing  
in unison with it is not unpleasant), a silver  
tree upon which the sun shines (its brilliance  
is as that of gold)...

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: entrance of the Otherworld

Audience: Loeg, in his journey to Mag Mell, an Otherworld place

Performer: An unknown, mysterious Otherworld source

Instrument: a bright silver tree has a musicality all its own

Char.'s of Music:

110.1: a "pleasant"-sounding bright silver tree, which is  
as brilliant as the sun; text seems to imply that  
this tree has an inherent musicality all its own.

Effects of Music:

none specific.

[Number 111]

Title: "The Cry of the Garb"--(attributed to Suibne Geilt)  
("The Garb", meaning 'Rough One', praised in this poem seems to be a name given to the tidal waters of the Barrow [river]--G. Murphy.)

Manuscript: Brussels MS. 5100-4, p. 52 (transcribed in "the early 17th c."--G. Murphy)

Approximate Dating: "A date of about the middle of the twelfth century is indicated..."--G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text: Gáir na Gairbe glaíðbinne  
glaídes re tosach tuinne;  
rátha aidble aibinne  
d'íasc oc irsnám 'na bruine!

...Cairche cíuil at-chluinimse  
'sin Gairb go nglúaire geimrid;  
ra muirn móir con-tuilimse  
i n-aidche adúair eigrid...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 112-5,  
(1970 ed.)

[111] Translation:

The cry of the tunefully-roaring Garb  
sounding against the sea's first wave!  
Great lovely schools of fish swim about  
in its bosom.

...I hear melodious music in the Garb at the  
time of its winter splendor; I sleep to the  
sound of great revelry on a very cold  
icy night...

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: river

Audience: St. Mo Ling; however, "...the poem is clearly imagined as being spoken by Suibne Geilt," the "madman poet" who spent his last days at St. Mo Ling's monastery in so. Co. Carlow.--(G. Murphy.)

Performer: Not specifically stated.

Instrument: river, especially in the winter.

Char.'s of Music:

111.1: "tunefully roaring", "melodious" river

Effects of Music:

111.a: he implies that he fell asleep to the "music" of the river

[Number 112]

Title: "The Cry of the Garb"

Manuscript: Brussels MS. 5100-4, p. 52 ("early 17th c."--  
G. Murphy)

Approximate Dating: "middle of the 12th c." poem--G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text: ...Éoin chalaíd co céolchaire,  
céoilbinne a ngotha gnátha;  
impa rom-geib éolchaire,  
má ceilebrad cech trátha...

...Is ríu sein con-tuilmse  
ar bennaib is ar barrgail;  
na céola do-chluinimse  
is airfeitiud dom anmain...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p.114-5,  
(1970 ed.)

[112] Translation:

...Musical birds of the shore, music-sweet their  
constant cryings! Lonely longing has seized me  
to hear their chanting as they sing the hours...

...I sleep to those melodies on mountain tops and  
tree tops; the tunes which I hear are music  
to my soul...

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: shore of river, mountain tops, tree tops

Audience: St. Mo Ling (some authors attribute to Suibne Geilt)

Performer: birds

Instrument: their "cryings", "chanting"

Char.'s of Music:

112.1: "sweet" music of birds' singing

112.2: implies a religious singing, as "they sing the hours"...

Effects of Music:

112.a: listener falls asleep

[Number 113]

Title: "The Cry of the Garb"

Manuscript: Brussels MS. 5100-4, p. 52 ("early 17th c."-G. Murphy)

Approximate Dating: Poem attributed to the mid-12th c.--G. Murphy.

Old Ir. Text:       ...Céol na salm go salmglaine  
                          i Rinn Ruis Bruic cen búaine;  
                          dordán daim duinn damgaire  
                          do lecaín Erce úaire...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 114-5,  
(1970 ed.)

[113] Translation:

...Chanting of the psalm-pure psalms at the  
Point of Ros Bruic, which will not long be  
so called; \*    roar of the brown belling stag  
from the cheek of cold Erc...

[\*= The old name Ros Bruic gave way to the name  
Tech Mo Ling ('Mo Ling's House'), now called  
St. Mullin's, south Co. Carlow.]

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: River Barrow, by St. Mo Ling's monastery,  
in so. Co. Carlow.

Audience: St. Mo Ling (some authors attribute to Suibne Geilt)

Performer: Not specifically stated.

Instrument: the river, as it "chants" psalms

Char.'s of Music:

113.1: "psalm-pure psalms", sung by the river

Effects of Music:

none specific.

[Number 114]

Title: "The Cry of the Garb"

Manuscript: Brussels MS. 5100-4, p. 52 ("early 17th c."-G. Murphy)

Approximate Dating: Poem attributed to the mid-12th c.--G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text:     ...Ess Máige, Ess Dubthaige, Ess Rúaid cos'  
                          reithet maigre, gidat imda a turthaige,  
                          binne fogar na Gairbe...

                  ...Taídiu thenn na tairngire,  
                  binn a hairdess co n-áine;  
                  in Tacarda ainglide--  
                  ga hess as glaine gáire?...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 116-7,  
          (1970 ed.)

[114] Translation:

...Though many things be told of the falls at Ess  
Maige, at Ess Dubthaige, and at Assaroe to which  
salmon run, the voice of the Garb is more musical...

...The strong prophesied Watercourse, its high cascade  
is tuneful! The angelic Tacarda--what cascade is  
purer in cry?

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: river Barrow

Audience: St. Mo Ling (some authors attribute to Suibne Geilt)

Performer: Not specifically stated.

Instrument: the river Barrow

Char.'s of Music:

114.1: "voice" of the Garb is "more musical" than the famous falls  
in Ireland; it is "tuneful"

Effects of Music:

none specific.

[Number 115]

Title: "Suibne in the Woods"

[Here, king Suibne is in exile, a wandering "madman", a poet in the woods, due to the curse of St. Ronan Finn, and tells of his adventures in exile to the old hag woman of the mill.]

Manuscript: R.I.A. B IV 1 MS. (1671), ff. 88a-88b; also  
R.I.A. 23 K 44 MS., (1722) p. 153-8.

Approximate Dating of Poem: late 12th c.--G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text:

A bennáin, a búiredáin,  
a béicedáin binn,  
is binn linn in cúicherán  
do-ní tú 'sin glinn...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 122-3,  
(1970 ed.)

[115] Translation:

Antlered one, belling one, you of the  
musical cry, we love to hear the sound  
which you make in the glen...

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: glen

Audience: Suibne Geilt, in exile, with the old hag, conversing  
on a tree branch, both disguised as birds.

Performer: stag

Instrument: its bellowing voice, described as a "musical" cry

Char.'s of the Music:

115.1: "musical cry" of the stag

Effects of Music:

none specific



Title: "Suibne in the Woods"

Manuscript: R.I.A. B IV 1 MS. (1671), ff. 88a-88b; also  
R.I.A. 23 K 44 MS. 91722), p. 153-8.

Approximate Dating: "late 12th century"--G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text: ...A beithe bláith bennachtach,  
a borrfadach binn,  
álainn gach cráeb chengailtech  
i mullach do chinn...

...Maith a eidnech idnaide;  
maith a sail glan grinn;  
maith a ibar ibraide;  
ferr a beithe binn...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 128-9,  
(1970 ed.)

[116] Translation:

...Smooth blessed birch, musical and proud,  
beautiful is every entangled branch high up  
on your top...

[Suibne is now referring to Glenn mBolcain buirr,  
"The Glen of mighty Bolcan." ]...

...Good its pure ivy-clad tree; good its pleasant  
bright willow; good its yewy yew; better its  
melodious birch...

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: forest, and Glen of mighty Bolcan.

Audience: Suibne and the hag

Performer: Not specifically stated

Instrument: the "musical" birch tree

Char.'s of Music:

116.1: the "musical and proud", "melodious" birch tree

Effects of Music:

none specific.

Title: "Suibne in the Woods"

Manuscript: R.I.A. B IV 1 MS. (1671), ff. 88a-88b; also  
R.I.A. 23 K 44 MS. (1722), p. 153-8.

Approximate Dating of Poem: "late 12th century"--G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text: ...Ní charaim in sibenrad  
do-níat fir is mná;  
binne lim ac ceilebrad  
lon 'sin aird i tá.

Ní charaim in stocairecht  
at-chluinim go moch;  
binne lim ac brocairecht  
bruic i mbennaib broc.

Ní charaim in cornairecht  
at-chluinim go tenn;  
binne lim ac damgairecht  
dam da fichet benn...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 134-5,  
(1970 ed.)

[117] Translation:

...I like not the lovers' talk which men and women make;  
a blackbird warbling where he is sounds more musical  
to me.

I like not the noise of trumpets which I hear in the  
morning; badgers calling in badger-haunted mountain-  
peaks are more musical to me.

I like not the horn-blowing which I tensely hear;  
when a stag with forty antlers bells I find it  
more musical...

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: forest wildlife

Audience: Suibne and the old hag

Performer: Not specifically stated; (perhaps wildlife)

Instruments: the noise(s) of the stag, badger, and blackbird

Char.'s of Music:

117.1: "warbling" blackbird; "badger-haunted" mountains described  
as musical; stag's belling as musical.

Effects of Music:

none specific.

[Number 118]

Title: "Suibne in the Woods"

Manuscript: R.I.A. B IV 1 MS. (1671), ff. 88a-88b; also  
R.I.A. 23 K 44 MS. (1722) p. 153-8.

Approximate Dating of Poem: "late 12th c."--G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text: ...Bid ann bías mo bithlige  
tes ac Taídin teinn;  
ac Tig Mo Ling bithainglide  
táethussa do beinn.

Do-rat mise it chummansa  
mallacht Rónáin Finn,  
a bennáin, a búiredáin,  
a béicedáin binn.

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 136-7,  
(1970 ed.)

[118] Translation:

...Beside the firm Taidiu (Water-course) in the  
south my lasting resting-place will be;  
at the monastery of angelic Mo Ling I shall  
fall by the instrumentality of an antler-peak.

Ronan Finn's curse has brought me into your  
company, antlered one, belling one, you of  
the musical cry.

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: forest, in presence of a stag

Audience: Exiled Suibne and the old hag

Performer: wildlife in the forest

Instrument: stag's belling

Char.'s of Music:

118.1: the "musical cry" of the stag's belling

Effects of Music:

none specific.

[Number 119]

Title: "Suibne in the Snow"

Manuscripts: R.I.A. B IV 1 MS. (1671), f. 91b; also  
R.I.A. 23 K 44 MS. (1722), p. 169-70.

Approximate Dating of Poem: "late 12th century"--G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text:

...Ó Shléib Chúa (ní turas tais)  
ricim go Glais Gáille grinn;  
ó Glais Gáille (gid céim cían)  
ricim sair go Sliab mBreg mbinn...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 138-9;  
(1970 ed.)

[119] Translation:

...From the Knockmealdown mountains (it is no  
easy expedition) I come to the river in  
pleasant Gaille. From the Gaille river  
(though it is a long journey) I make my  
way east to music-haunted Slieve Brey...

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: mountain (Slieve Brey)

Audience: Suibne, mourning his fate in the cold of winter

Performer: Not specifically stated

Instrument: A mountain--"music-haunted" Slieve Brey.

Char.'s of Music:

119.1: "music-haunted" mountain; implies a supernatural place

Effects of Music:

none specific.

[Number 120]

Title: "Cael Praises Creide's House"  
[from Accalam na Senorach, "The Colloquy of the  
Ancient Men"]

Manuscripts: Book of Lismore (15th c.), fo.206c;  
Laud 610 (c.1400) in Bodleian Library Oxford;  
Acallam manuscript, in the Franciscan Library,  
Killiney, Co. Dublin.(late 15th-16th c.),p.12 col.2;  
Rawlinson B 487, Bodleian MS. (16th c.); f. 17r.

Approximate Dating of Poem: "last quarter of the 12th c.", acc.  
to G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text: ...Ro choitéltais fir.gona  
cona táescaib tromfola  
re hénuib síde ac síanán  
ós borduib a glaingríanán...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 144-5,  
(1970 ed.)

[120] Translation:

...Wounded men spouting heavy blood  
would sleep to the music of fairy birds  
singing above the eaves of her bright bower...

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: Otherworld house/dwelling

Audience: Caelte, as he tells of the sidhe woman Creide's house

Performer: sidhe birds

Instrument: their voice(s), singing

Char.'s of Music:

120.1: the music of sidhe birds' Otherworldly singing

Effects of Music:

120.a: gravely wounded men would sleep to their music

[Number 121]

Title: "Creide's Lament for Cael"  
[from the Accalam na Senorach, "The Colloquy of the  
Ancient Men]

Manuscripts: Book of Lismore, fo. 207a; Franciscan, p. 13,  
col. 1; and Rawlinson B 487, f. 17v.  
(approximately 15th c. manuscripts)

Approximate Dating of Poem: "late 12th century"--G. Murphy.

Old Ir. Text:

...Caínice corr  
do-ni tonn trom Tulcha Léis;  
mise nochan fuil mo maín  
ó rom-maíd in scél rom-géis...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 150-1,  
(1970 ed.)

[121] Translation:

...Strange music is made by the heavy wave of  
Tulach Leis; as for me my wealth does not  
exist since it has boasted to me of the  
tale which its roar has borne to me...

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: wave of river

Audience: Creide, commenting on it as she laments the death  
of her husband, the warrior Cael

Performer: Not specifically stated

Instrument: river

Char.'s of Music:

121.1: "strange" music from wave of river (implies a "haunted"  
quality)

Effects of Music:  
none specific.

[Number 122]

Title: "Description of Winter and Memory of the Past"  
[from Accalam na Senorach, "The Colloquy of the  
Ancient Men"]

Manuscripts: Book of Lismore, (fo. 223c); Laud 610 (f. 129v);  
Franciscan (p. 46, col.2); Rawlinson B 487 (f. 35v)  
(approximately 15th c. manuscripts)

Approximate Dating of Poem: "late 12th century"--G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text:     ...Ní thabair a tháeb re lár,  
                    dam Sléibe Cairn na comdal;  
                    ní luga at-chluin céol cúaine  
                    dam Cinn Echtge innúaire.

                    Mise Cailte, is Diarmait donn,  
                    ocus Oscar áith étrom,  
                    ro choistmis re céol cúaine,  
                    deired aidche adúaire...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 154-5,  
(1970 ed.)

[122] Translation:

...The stag of Slievecarran of the assemblies  
does not lay his side to the ground; the stag  
of the head of cold Aughty listens likewise  
to wolf-music.

I Cailte, and brown-haired Diarmait, and  
keen light Oscar, used to listen to wolf-music  
at the end of a very cold night...

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: river and forests

Audience: the Fianna warriors, Cailte, Diarmait, Oscar

Performer: wolves

Instrument: their howling described as "wolf-music"

Char.'s of Music:  
122.1: "wolf-music"

Effects of Music:

none specific.

[Number 123]

Title: "May-Day"

Manuscript: Laud 610 (Oxford) p. 120. (This manuscript was written in the 15th century, and includes part of the story of the Boyhood Deeds of the legendary Finn Mac Cumail.)

Approximate Dating: Poem: "ninth century"--G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text:

...Seinnid caille céol;  
con-greinn séol síd slán;  
síatair denn do dinn,  
dé do loch linn lán...

...Lengait fainnle fúas;  
im-said crúas cíuil cróich  
for-beir mes máeth méth;  
innisid loth loíth...

...Leig lath fath feig;  
fert ar-cain cuí chruaid;  
cuirithir brecc bedc;  
is balc gedc láith lúaithe...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 158-9;  
(1970 ed.)

[123] Translation: [Finn cites, to prove his poetic skill:]

...Woodland music plays; melody provides perfect peace; dust  
is blown from dwelling-place, and haze from lake full  
of water...

...Swallows dart aloft; vigour of music surrounds the hill(?)  
soft rich fruit flourishes...

...the hardy cuckoo sings; the trout leaps; strong is the  
swift warrior's....

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: Woodland environment

Audience: Finn mac Cumail

Performer: cuckoo bird, woodland

Instrument: cuckoo's "voice"; and the "music" of the woodland

Char.'s of Music:

123.1: melody provides "perfect peace"; "vigour" of the woodland

Effects of Music:

none specific.



[Number 124]

Title: "Summer Has Gone"

Manuscript: Rawl. B 502, facs. 106 (12th c. manuscript)

Approximate Dating: 10th c. poem--K. Meyer

Old Ir. Text:

... "Canaid cuí ceól mbláith  
dia mbí súan saim réid;  
lengait eóin ciúin crúaich  
ocus daim lúraith léith...

... Canaid lon dron dord  
diambi forbb caill cherb;  
Súanaid ler lonn líach,  
fo-ling íach brec bedc..."

Source: Greene, David, and O'Connor, Frank, A Golden Treasury of Irish Poetry, London, 1967, p.137-8.

[124] Translation:

... "The cuckoo sings sweet music  
and there is smooth, soft sleep.  
Birds skim the quiet hill and  
the swift grey stags...

... The hardy blackbird who owns the  
thorny wood sings a bass;  
the wild, weary sea reposes and  
the speckled salmon leaps..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: trees in the wood

Audience: Christian hermit

Performers: cuckoos, blackbird

Instruments: birds' voices/singing

Char.'s of Music:

124.1: "sweet" music

Effects of Music:

124.a: "smooth, soft sleep"

[Number 125]

Title: "Song of Summer"

Manuscript: Laud 610 (Oxford) p. 120. (15th c. manuscript)

Approximate Dating: 9th c. poem--G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text: ... "Seinnid caille céol;  
con-greinn séol síd slán;  
síatair denn do dinn,  
dé do loch linn lán..."

Labraid tragna trén;  
canaid ess n-ard n-úag  
fáilti do thoinn té;  
táinic lúachra lúad..."

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956,  
p. 157-9.

Translation: ... "Woodland music plays;  
melody provides perfect peace;  
dust is blown from dwelling-place,  
and haze from lake full of water..."

The strenuous corncrake speaks;  
the high pure cataract sings  
of joy from the warm water;  
rustling of rushes has come..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: Woodland

Audience: Christian hermit

Performers: the wind (?)

Instruments: the various trees, shrubs, birds, etc. of woods

Char.'s of Music:

125.1: "perfect peace" of the woodland melody

Effects of Music:

125.a: peaceful contentment for the hermit, with his hard, ascetic  
existence

[Number 126]

Title: "Diarmait's Sleep"

Manuscript: Duanaire Finn (early 17th c. manuscript), f. 44b;  
in the Franciscan Library, Killiney, Co. Dublin.

Approximate Dating of Poem: "first half of the 12th c."-G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text:     ...Ní chotail in chaínche bras  
                    ós barraib na crann cáemchas;  
                    is glórach a-táthar ann;  
                    gi bé in smólach ní chotlann.

                    ...In-nocht ní chotail in gerg;  
                    ós fráechaib anfaid imard  
                    binn fogar a gotha glain:  
                    eitir srotha ní chotail...

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956, p. 164-5;  
(1970 ed.)

[126] Translation:

...The lively linnet does not sleep above the  
tops of the fair tangled trees; loud music  
prevails there; no thrush sleeps...

...Tonight the curlew does not sleep; high above  
a storm's ragings the sound of its clear cry  
is musical; it sleeps not between streams...

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: sky, as birds fly

Audience: Diarmait answers Grainne

Performer: linnet; curlew (birds)

Instrument: their voices/singing described as musical

Char.'s of Music:

126.1: "loud" music of the linnets above the tree tops; also,  
the "musical" cry of the curlew, above a storm

Effects of Music:

none specific.

[Number 127]

Title: "A Song of Winter"--poem from "Uath Beinne Etair"

Manuscript: Harl. 5280, fo.35a, 2-35b,I. [15th c. manuscript]

Approximate Dating: "Probably 10th c." poem--K. Meyer

Old Ir. Text: ..."Siuplad ar iasc Inse Fail,  
ni [f]uil traich nach tiprai tonn:  
a m-proccaibh nicota proc,  
ni leir cloc, ní lapar corr..."

Source: Meyer, K., "Uath Beinne Etair", RC 11, Paris,  
1890, p.130

[127]: Translation: [a comment on the bitter cold winter]:

"...The fishes of Innis Fail are a-roaming,  
There is no marge nor well of waves,  
In the lands there is no land,  
Not a bell is heard, no crane talks..."

Source: Ibid., p. 133.

Location of Music: The water near a cave of Hill of Howth;

Audience: none specific; hermit is commenting on winter time

Performer: absence of any music or musical sounds is noted  
as being a characteristic of winter--no bell(s),  
no cranes heard, as they would be at other times.

Instrument: None in winter.

Char.'s of Music:

127.1: absence of any music, or musical sounds from nature,  
is viewed as being a characteristic of the season  
of winter.

Effects of Music:

127.a: absence of any music is (implied) to be rather  
depressing and unfortunate, according to the overall  
tone of the monastic narrator in the entire poem.

Title: "The Song of Cred, daughter of Guaire"

Manuscript: Harl. 5280, fol. 15b (15th c. manuscript)

Approximate Dating: 10th c. tale (K. Meyer); late 9th c. (Murphy)

Old Ir. Text:

... "Binníu laídib a labrad acht Ríg nime nóebadrad:  
án bréo cen bréthir mbraise, céle tana toébthaise..."

Canair i n-íath Aidni áin, im thóebu Cille Colmáin,  
án bréo des Luimnech lechtach díanid comainm Dínertach..."

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford, 1956,  
p. 86. [1970 ed.]

[128]: Translation:

[In the battle of Aidne, Cred, the daughter of King Guaire of Aidne, beheld Dinertach of the Hy Fidgenti, who had come to the aid of Guaire, with seventeen wounds upon his breast. Then she fell in love with him. He died, and was buried in the cemetery of Colman's Church.]

... "Sweeter than all songs was his speech save holy adoration of Heaven's King: glorious flame without a word of boasting, slender softsided mate... In the land of Aidne, around the sides of Cel Cholmain, men sing of a glorious flame, from the south of Limerick of the graves, whose name is Dinertach..."

Source: Ibid., p. 87.

Location of Music: his speech while alive; also, around his grave.

Audience: none specific; Cred is lamenting a loved one

Performer: a man's speech; & those singing around Colman's church

Instrument: Voices--spoken and sung.

Char.'s of Music:

128.1: "Sweeter than songs" was Dinertach's speech, while alive

128.2: Concept for sung praise of God, as refers to singing around Colman's church in the meadow of Aidne, after Dinertach died, to honor him at his gravesite

Effects of Music:  
none specific.

[Number 129]

Title: "Liadin Tells of Her Love for Curithir"

Manuscripts: Trinity College Dublin H.3.18,759 sq., and British Museum Harl. 5280,26 sq. [Dating: late 15th c.]

Approximate Dating: 9th c. poem--G. Murphy

Old Ir. Text:       ... "Céol caille  
                          fom-chanad la Cuirithir  
                          la fogur fairge flainne..."

Source: Murphy, G., Early Irish Lyrics, Oxford,  
1956, p.84. (1970 ed.)

[129]: Translation:

    ... "Forest music  
          used to sing to me beside Cuirithir  
          together with the sound of the fierce sea..."

Source: Ibid., p. 85.

Location of Music: forest

Audience: Liadin, a poetess

Performer: Not specifically stated; "music" of the forest implied

Instrument: music of the trees, and perhaps birds, of the forest  
                  together with the voice of the "fierce sea"

Char.'s of Music;

129.1: Music of the forest and the voice of the sea "sing" to  
          the poetess Liadin, while she was with Curithir, her  
          love.

Effects of Music:

129.a: happiness, and perhaps a symbol to her of being  
          with her true love, Curithir.

[Number 130]

Title: "The Blackbird"

Manuscript: ["From the margins, on p. 36, of the Leabhar Breac manuscript"--Kuno Meyer]

Approximate Dating: late 14th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text:

"Och, a luin, is buide duit  
cáit sa muine a fuil do net,  
a díthrebaig nad clind cloc,  
is bind boc sithamail t'fet."

Source: Carney, J., Early Irish Poetry, Cork, 1965, p.11.

[130]: Translation:

"Ah, blackbird, it is well for you,  
Wherever in the thicket be your nest,  
Hermit that sounds no bell,  
Sweet, soft, fairylike is your note."

Source: Ibid., p. 12.

Location of Music: blackbird's nest

Audience: a hermit monk

Performer: blackbird

Instrument: its "song"/voice

Char.'s of Music:

- 130.1: "sweet, soft, fairylike" is the blackbird's song
- 130.2: this "music" of the blackbird is mentioned as being  
different from a hermit's bell sound

Effects of Music;

- 130.a: Perhaps a great joy for the hermit to listen to the  
blackbird's sweet music; he seems to feel its music  
is a contrast to his settled, monastic life.

[Number 131]

Title: "To St. Brigit"

Manuscript: LL [12th c.] (Irish text edited by Kuno Meyer in 1912 from the copy in the Book of Leinster, lines 7148-251 in the D.I.A.S. ed.--Greene and O'Connor)

Approximate Dating: 9th c. poem--Greene and O'Connor.

Old Ir. Text: ... "Glés a hindéon cotad cúar,  
clúas a dúan di thengthaib bard,  
bruth a fer fri comlann nglan,  
cruth a ban fri hoenach n-ard...

A céoil binni i cach thráth,  
a fínbarc for tonngur flann,  
a fross argait ordain móir,  
a tuirc óir a tírib Gall..."

Source: Green, David, and O'Connor, Frank, A Golden Treasury of Irish Poetry, London, 1967, p.68-70.

Translation: [these excerpts comment on the early Irish kingship site of the Hill of Alenn]:

..."The music of its bent hard anvils, the sound of its songs from the tongues of poets, the fire of its men at the great contest, the beauty of its women at the high assembly...

...Its lovely melodies at every hour, its wineship on the blue wave, its shower of silver of great brilliance, its gold neckbands from the lands of Gaul..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: Hill of Alenn, an early center of kingship

Audience: none specific; narrator is commenting on past

Performer: "music" of the anvils of smiths; poets' songs

Instruments: anvils (at battlefield); poets' voices

Char.'s of Music:

131.1: "lovely melodies" every hour, at the Hill of Alenn

Effects of Music:

131.a: narrator feels that the "music" of the anvils, the poets' songs, and the melodies every hour add greatly to the glory of the Hill of Alenn as a kingship center.



[Number 132]

Title: "A Winter Night"

Manuscript: A poem from the Accalam na Senorach; Book of Lismore, fo. 181b2.

Approximate Dating of Manuscript: 15th c.

Old Ir. Text: ... "Ní thabhair a thaobh re lár  
damh Shléibhe Cairn na gcomhdhál;  
ní lugha at-chluin ceol cuaine  
damh Chinn Eachtgha ionnuaire.

Mise Caoilte, is Diarmaid donn,  
agus Oscar áith éadrom,  
ro choistmís re ceol cuaine  
deireadh aidhche adhuaire..."

Source: Greene, David, and O'Connor, Frank, A Golden Treasury of Irish Poetry, London, 1967, p. 189.

Translation: ... "The stag of Slieve Carn of the assemblies does not lay his side to the ground, and the stag of cold Ceann Eachtgha listens to the music of the wolfpack.

Myself, Caoilte, and brown Diarmaid, and Oscar bright and swift; we listened to the music of the wolfpack at the end of a cold night..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: out in nature, in the mountains

Audience: four persons--narrator, Caoilte, Diarmaid, Oscar and the stags

Performers: wild wolves

Instruments: wolves' voices baying

Char. of Music:

132.1: music of the wolfpack on a cold night

Effects of Music:

none specific.

[Number 133]

Title: "Aislinge meic Conglinne"  
"Vision of Mac Conglinne"

Manuscript: Lebor Breac

Approximate Dating: late 14th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text:

"Atcūala ochtar anocht  
i n-Ard Macha Īar midnocht  
fortgillim co m-búidnib band,  
nīdat cuibde a commanmand."

Source: Meyer, K., Aislinge Meic Conglinne, Irish Texts  
Society, London, 1892, p. 6-7.

[133] Translation:

"I heard of eight tonight  
In Armagh after midnight;  
I proclaim them with hosts of deeds,  
Their names are no sweet symphonies."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: None specific; is an analogy to names

Audience: None specific

Performer: None specific

Instrument: Analogy made to names as "no sweet symphonies"

Char.'s of Music:

133.1: None specifically named; Analogy made to certain names  
as not being "sweet symphonies" (satire)

Effects of Music:

133.a: None specifically stated; however, here it appears that  
a "good name" is a "sweet" symphony, and therefore a  
"bad name" is not.

SAINT'S LIVES/VISIONS

[Number 134]

Title: "Fís Adamnan"  
"Vision of St. Adamnan"

Manuscript: LU: fo. 27-31

Approximate Dating: late 11th-early 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text:

..."Issí dan cétna tír coso-rancatár, tír na naeb...Cach oen iarom fil i tír ina naeb, is comfocus do estecht inna ceól agus innithmígd inna luinge hi failet nóí n-grád nime iarna cémennaib agus iarna n-urd. Indara fecht dan dona naebaib canait ceol n-adamra oc molad Dé, in fecht n-aill contuaset fri ceol muintire nime, ar ní recat a les ind naim ní aile acht éstecht in ceoil risa coistet, agus innithmígd inna soilse addecet, agus a sásad don boltnogud fil is tír...agus ceól enlathe muintire nime oca n-airfítiud. Buidne ana do ainglib coimthechta inna n-anmand oc umallóit agus oc timthirecht eter na hairichtaib sin i fíadnaisi ind rígd dogrés...Tri eóin aregda imorro isin chathair i fiadnaise ind rígd, agus a menma ina n-dulemain tria bithu, issé sin a n-dan. Celebrait dan na ocht trath oc molad agus oc adamrugud in coimded co claischétol aircaingel oc tiachtain fóí. O na henaib iarom agus ona harcainglib tinscetal in cheóil, agus nos frecrat iarsin muintir nime ule eter nóemu agus nóemóga...Tri leca logmara dan co fogur bláith agus co m-binne cheóil eter cach da primairecht agus allethe úachtarcha ina lócharnaib for lassad...

Source: Windisch, E., Irische Texte, Leipzig, 1880,  
p. 173-8.

[134]: Translation:

"The first land to which they came was the Land of the Saints...everyone in the Land of the Saints is equally near to hear the songs and to contemplate the vessel in which are the Nine Orders of Heaven in accordance with their ranks and their station. Part of the time the Saints sing a marvellous song in praise of God, and the rest of the time they listen to the song of the Heavenly Host, for the Saints have need of nothing but to be listening to the music to which they listen and to behold the light which they look at...and the song of the birds of the Heavenly Host makes music for them. Glorious bands of the guardian angels are continually doing obeisance and service among these assemblies in the presence of the King...

They celebrate the eight canonical hours...the choral song of the Archangels coming in in harmony. The birds and the Archangels lead the song, and all the Heavenly Host, both saints and holy virgins, answer them in antiphony...there are three precious stones making soft sounds and sweet music between every two principal assemblies...

[Note: Then, the angel shows Adamnan Hell, and explains:...Now while the saintly companies of the Heavenly Host sing joyfully and gladly the harmonious chorus of the eight canonical hours, praising the Lord, the souls give forth pitiful and grievous howls as they are beaten without respite by throngs of demons..."

Source: Jackson, K.H., A Celtic Miscellany, London, 1971, p. 288-295.

Location of Music: Land of the Saints in Christian Heaven

Audience: St. Adamnan

Performers: throngs of holy angelic choirs and the Saints present there, the birds of the Heavenly Host, and also, three precious stones sing

Instruments: Voices: angelic singing by saints and angels; singing by the birds of the Heavenly Host, and three stones make "music" with their "voices"

Char.'s of Music;

134.1: Joyful angelic music of saints, angels, and birds in this Christian Heaven; each angelic choir has its rank and station in the Otherworld hierarchy.

134.2: This singing is described as "marvellous", "glorious"

134.3: Three precious stones are described as "making soft sounds and sweet music"

Effects of Music:

134.a: Clearly, this Heavenly Otherworld is considered to be inherently harmonic, with the music of the spheres and archangels taken for granted as being ever-present.

134.b: Joyful, angelic music present only in Heaven, however; note its absence in Hell, where howls of damned are heard.

[Number 135]

Title: "Cain Adamnain"  
"The Law of St. Adamnan"

Manuscript: Rawl. B 512, fo. 45a1-51b1

Approximate Dating: late 14th -early 15th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text:

..."Ní ruc Adomnán claideb les dochum in chathai, acht clocc na fferce Adomnāin .i. cluicīn mesi Adomnāin. Is annsin atrubart Adomnán na bréathra sa: `Benaím-si in cluiccīn sae i taob Letreg ar ōenlus,...Maldagt Dé for Élodach...ben clucc ar Cellach Carmain, co raib i talmāin,rīa ciunn blíadna...Clac Adomnāin fírfertaich mór de rīghaib rofāsaig..."

Source: Meyer, K., Cain Adamnain: An Old-Irish Treatise on the Law of Adamnan, Oxford, 1905, p. 10-11.

[135] Translation: [re: Adamnan's curse on kings who tried to kill him, as they did not want to convert:]

..."Adamnan took no sword with him to the battle, but the Bell of Adamnan's Wrath, to wit, the little bell of Adamnan's altar-table. It is then Adamnan spoke these words: `I strike this little bell by the side of Lettir on purpose... God's curse on Elodach, the chief of Femen of the Deissi...Strike a bell against Cellach of Carman, that he may be in the earth before a year's end...The bell of truly-miraculous Adamnan has made desolate many kings..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: Saint's curse at a battle

Audience: St. Adamnan

Performer: God, through St. Adamnan's holy chanting

Instrument: the bell of Adamnan

Char.'s of Music:

135.1: curse/malediction against certain kings that were against St. Adamnan's missionary efforts--by his bell.

Effects of Music:

135.a: The [later] effect of St. Adamnan striking his bell, and cursing the kings, making many of them desolate.

[Number 136]

Title: "Life of Brennain"  
"Life of St. Brendan"

Manuscript: Book of Lismore: fo. 31b-35a1.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; St.'s legends earlier.

Old Ir. Text:

"`Siridh 7 feghaidh,' ar se, `brughe parrthais 7 muighi milidhi in tiri solusta, suaichnidh, socharthanaig, soc[h]archain, n-aird, n-aireghdha, n-aluinn, n-oeibhinn. Tir boladhmhar, blathmhin, bennachtach. Tir ilcheolach, airpheteach, nuallfhaeiltech, nemthoirrsiuch."

Source: Stokes, W., Lives of Saints from the Book of Lismore, Oxford, 1890, p. 114.

[136]: Translation: [St. Brendan and his men encounter "a certain old man" on an island in the Land of Promise]:

"`Search ye and see,' saith he, `the plains of Paradise and the delightful fields of the land, radiant, famous, lovable, profitable, lofty, noble, beautiful, delightful. A land odorous, flower-smooth, blessed. A land many-melodied, musical, shouting for joy, unmournful.'"

Source: Ibid., p. 259.

Location of Music: A Christian Paradise

Audience: St. Brendan and his clergy

Performer: An Otherworld dimension as performer; Paradise and its "many-melodied" plains

Instrument: None specific; seems to imply a "harmonic" reality to Otherworld dimension(s)

Char.'s of Music:

136.1: Land of Christian Paradise visited by St. Brendan described as "a land many-melodied, musical, shouting for joy, unmournful."

Effects of Music:

136.a: Music contributes greatly to the harmonic, joyful nature of Paradise; in fact, it is viewed here as a natural quality of Paradise; it is delightful.

[Number 137]

Title: "St. Brendan and the Harper"

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fo. 43b1

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; St.'s legends earlier.

Old Ir. Text: ..." `A mbadhus hi suidhiu rom-gabh crith 7 uamon. Confaca én [entrocht] for an seinistir connessidh forsin altoir. Foreimdhuis silled fair lasna ruithnibh griandai batar imbe.' `Beannacht fort 7 bennach dhún, a cleirigh!' ol se. `Rot-bennacha Dia!' ol Brennain. `Cid thu?' ol Brennain. `Michél aingel,' ol se, `do th'acalluimsi.' `Atloch[am]ar do Dia h'acalluim,' ol Brennain, `7 cidh dia tudchaid?' `Dot bennachad 7 dot airfitiud od Tigerna,' ol in t-en... `Dobhiursa mo breithir fiadh Dia,' ol Brennain, `nach binde lium ceol do cheoluibh domuin andiaigh an ceoil-sin inas in stoil-sea darsin mbraghuid..."

Source: Stokes, W., "The Story of St. Brenainn, the young harper and the bird-like angel", Lives of Saints from the Book of Lismore, Oxford, 1890, p. xiv-xv.

[137]: Translation:

[A student harpist wishes to play for St. Brendan; Brendan resists, as he claims the best music he has ever heard came in the form of a shining bird, sent from God:]

"I saw a shining bird at the window, and it sat on the altar. I was unable to look at it because of the rays which surrounded it, like those of the sun... `who are you?' said Brennain. `The angel Michael,' it said, `come to speak with you.' `I give thanks to God for speaking with you,' said Brennain, `and why have you come?' `To bless you and to make music for you for your Lord,' said the bird...[says Brenainn to the student harpist:] `After that music, no music of the world seems any sweeter to me..."

Source: Jackson, K.H., A Celtic Miscellany, London, 1971, p. 283.

Location of Music: angelic birds sent to St. Brennain from God

Audience: St. Brennain

Performer: shining bird, who says it is St. Michael

Instrument: the birds' singing

Char.'s of Music:

137.1: angelic bird sings "sweet" music to St. Brennain, who later claims that it is the best he has ever heard-- the music of Heaven.

Effects of Music:

137.a: St. Brendan then rejects the offer of the student harpist to play for him, as it is music merely of this world.

[Number 138]

Title: "Life of St. Colman"

Manuscript: Ir. MS. at Rennes, fo. 75-89.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; St.'s legends earlier.

Old Ir. Text: "...Ind aidchi immurgu rucad Colman mac Luachain...Rofastad dano epscop Etchen in aidchi-sin hi Tig Lommain 7 o thainicc iarmergi 7 o atrachtatar na cleirig di...rochualadar na céola adamra imda immon cill cacha lethe 7 ni clos accu reme ní bad amra nach bad binniu, id est, angil nime ic faóilti fri Colmán mac Luacháin, amail dorónsat angil nime céolu imda adamra immon mBethil cecha lethe aidchi gene Críst."

Source: Meyer, K., Life of Colman, Dublin, 1911, p. 10.

[138]: Translation: "...On the night, however, when Colman son of Luachain was born...That night bishop Etchen stayed in Tech Lomain, and when matins had come and the clerics rose up for it...they heard many marvellous kinds of music around the church on every side; and nothing more marvellous and more melodious had ever been heard by them before--viz., angels of Heaven making welcome to Colman son of Luachain, as on the night of the birth of Christ angels made many marvellous kinds of music around Bethlehem on every side."

Source: Ibid., p. 11.

Location of Music: church at Tech Lomain

Audience: clerics

Performer: supernatural music from Heaven's angels

Instrument: singing of angels

Char.'s of Music:

138.1: Supernatural music of angelic choirs "greeting" the birth of St. Colman; compared to music at Christ's birth

138.2: This music is described as "marvellous" music, emphasizing that "nothing more marvellous and more melodious" had ever been heard by them before

Effects Of Music:

138.a: Supernatural angelic music as heralding the birth of a saint--clerics knew that there was something "special" about Colman's birth, due to the unexpected music.



[Number 139]

Title: "Life of St. Colman"

Manuscript: Ir. MS. at Rennes, fo. 75-89.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; St.'s legends earlier.

Old Ir. Text: "...Roailed íarum an mac co crábdhech 7 co inísel 7 nocluintis sailm 7 clascetul 7 guth cluicc cacha tratha 7 cocetal aifrind cach domuaig cach airm i mbíð-som, co ticdis na dáine dia íarfaigid: `cuích in senadh tána[i]c sund iróir?'"

Source: Meyer, K., Life of Colman, Dublin, 1911, p. 14.

[139]: Translation: "...the boy was brought up piously and humbly; and wherever he used to be they would hear psalms and choral song, and the sound of a bell at every canonical hour, and the singing of mass every Sunday, so that people would come to ask, 'what was the assembly that came here last night?'"

Source: Ibid., p. 15.

Location of Music: all around St. Colman, as a young boy

Audience: All who might be near him

Performer: Unknown--came from the supernatural realm of Heaven

Instrument: Unknown--came from the supernatural realm of Heaven

Char.'s of Music:

139.1: supernatural, mysterious music as always surrounding the young St. Colman: psalms, choruses, bell, singing, etc. Music as denoting a "chosen one".

Effects of Music:

139.a: People were wondering from where it came, and would ask; this music inspired awe and wonder re: Colman and his destiny.

Title: "Life of St. Colman"

Manuscript: Ir. MS. at Rennes, fo. 75-89.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; St.'s legends earlier.

Old Ir. Text: "...7 doberar clocc dóib cen tengaid and 7 troscit rempu aidchi cacha cille 7 batar secht bliadna timc[h]ill Érend ón mud-sin 7 ní labair a clocc frisin ré-sin. Hi cind secht [m]blíadna iarum iar ngabail Laindi, is ann rolabair accu a clocc ic tiachtain dochum Lainne ic Adrad Motura. Tecait iarum co Colmán..."

Source: Meyer, K., Life of Colman, Dublin, 1911, p. 26.

[140]: Translation:

[Thirty monks were sent by an angel from St. Mochuta, to St. Colman's community:]

"...And they are given a tongue-less bell, and they fast one night at every church to which they come. And in that way they wandered around Ireland for seven years, and during all that time their bell never spoke. Then at the end of seven years when they had reached Lann, their bell spoke at the spot called 'Worship of Motura', as they were coming to Lann. So they come to Colman..."

Source: Ibid., p. 27.

Location of Music: tongue-less bell "speaks" at Lann

Audience: thirty monks sent from St. Mochuta to Colman

Performer: Unknown and mysterious--is supernatural in origin

Instrument: tongue-less bell

Char.'s of Music:

140.1: Supernatural ringing of a tongue-less bell to signify arrival at St. Colman's church

140.2: Concept of a monk's bell ringing at a particular holy location--in this case, Lann

140.3: Time factor: it did so after a period of seven years

Effects of Music:

140.a: Signalled to the thirty monks that they had finally found the proper place, after seven years of searching. The tongue-less bell automatically rang by itself, being directed to do so from God.

[Number 141]

Title: "Life of St. Colman"

Manuscript: Ir. MS. at Rennes, fo. 75-89.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; St.'s legends earlier.

Old Ir. Text: "...7 ní rabi clogc aicci fri béim éitsechta a affrinn, conid andsin rotelged dó-som do neim an findfaidech Colmán meic Lúacháin, co fil áit a béoil isin c[h]loich fóss ann. Robenad íarum an cloc-sin acu."

Source: Meyer, K., Life of Colman, Dublin, 1911, p. 64.

[141]: Translation:

"...and he had no bell with him to sound the summons for hearing his Mass, so that then the Finnfaidech [sweet-sounding bell] of Colman mac Luachan was sent down to him from Heaven, and the mark of its rim is still there in the stone. So the bell was struck by them..."

Source: Ibid., p. 65.

Location of Music: Otherworld: St. Colman's bell suddenly materializes out of thin air to assist a priest with Mass

Audience: clerics

Performer: Unknown and mysterious--supernatural origin.

Instrument: St. Colman's bell sent from Heaven

Char.'s of Music:

141.1: supernatural appearance of St. Colman's bell to assist a priest with Mass

141.2: This bell, "finnfaidech", is a "sweet-sounding bell"

Effects of Music:

141.a: Divine intervention of a musical nature

141.b: This bell then "saves the day" for the priest; the clerics then sound the bell for Mass

141.c: This bell left an indelible impression, as "its rim is still there in the stone".

[Number 142]

Title: "Amra of Columcille"

Manuscript: LU: fo. 5a-15a1

Approximate Dating: late 11th-early 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "Ranic maige mos nad genetar eiuil. In id ber nem-genemain ceol, red runt remper in re."

Source: O'Beirne Crowe, J., The Amra Choluim Chilli, Dublin, 1871, p. 34.

[142]: Translation:

[Re: the death of St. Columba:]

"He has reached plains where it is a custom that melodies are not born. In which non-birth of melodies is the custom, but they are always in it."

Source: Ibid., p. 35.

Location of Music: Christian Heaven; an Otherworld dimension

Audience: non-specific

Performer: Heaven itself as harmonic, with ever-present melodies

Instrument: Not specifically stated

Char.'s of Music:

142.1: Heaven as a place where music is always there, i.e., it is inherently harmonic. Because of this, no new musical melodies need to be created.

Effects of Music:

142.a: It is considered to be a great honor of the highest order for St. Columba to be sent by God to such a musical Heaven.

[Number 143]

Title: "Amra of Columcille"

Manuscript: LU: fo. 5a-15a1

Approximate Dating: late 11th-early 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "Coitluid la docetul do nim-iath iarn a croich. Ir amlaid dolluid reom co íath nime iarn a cherad i for co cetul muintire nime 7 talman; no i ti[n]-clair aingel nime."

Source: O'Beirne Crowe, J., The Amra of Choluim Chillí,  
Dublin, 1871, p. 54.

[143]: Translation:

"He went with music to heaven-land after his cross. It is how he went to the land of heaven after his suffering here, with the music of the family of heaven and of earth: or, in the chief-choir of the angels of heaven."

Source: Ibid., p. 55.

Location of Music: Departing soul of a saint accompanied by music  
on its way to Heaven

Audience: none specific

Performer: Unknown and mysterious; it is of supernatural origin.

Instrument: Unknown; supernatural in origin.

Char.'s of Music:

none specifically named.

Effects of Music:

143.a: Departing soul of St. Columba is described as being accompanied by angelic music on its way to Heaven.  
"Effect" seems to be that such music is a mark of one who is "assured" heavenly status, by God, after death; narrator takes this fact for granted regarding the role of music.

[Number 144]

Title: "Amra of Columcille"

Manuscript: LU: fo. 5a-15a1

Approximate Dating: late 11th -early 12th c. manuscript

Old Ir. Text: "Is cruit cen ceis, is cell cen abaid. Céir ainm do cruit bic b'ir i comáitect cruite móre hi comriam: no, ainm don delgain bic fortar in téit him mude na crote, no do na coblaigib: no, ainm don trom-tet. No, ir í in ceir ir in cruit ani congbar in letrind con a tétaib inti, ut dixit poeta--Ros mac Find cecinit, no Fercertne File: Ni celt ceir ceol de cruit Crabtene co relartan for rluagu ruan-bar: conrert coibniur eter rceo Main Moriaet macdact Morca: ba mo lé cech lóg Labraid. ba binniu cec ceól in crot, Arpete Laibraid Loingrec Lorc: cia r'ba doct for rune in ri, ni roelt ceir Craiptini."

Source: O'Beirne Crowe, J., The Amra of Choluim Chilli,  
Dublin, 1871, p. 28-30.

[144]: Translation: "It is a harp without a base-chord, it is a church without an abbot. 'Ceis' is a name for a small harp which does be in accompaniment of a large harp in co-playing: or, a name for the small pin which holds the cord in the wood of the harp, or for the tacklings, or for the heavy chord. Or the 'ceis' in the harp is what holds the side-part with its chords in it, as the poet said--Ros Mac Find sang, or Fercertne the poet: 'The base-chord concealed not music from the harp of Craiphtine, until it dropped sleep-death upon hosts: It strew affinity between Main and full-grown Moriaet Morca: Greater with her than very price Labraid. Sweeter than any music the harp, which delighted Labraid Loingsech Lorc: though sullen upon secrets was the king, the base-chord of Craiphtine concealed not.'"

Source: Ibid., p. 29-31.

Location of Music: Comparison made here to St. Columba's death, and the ensuing anguish to his community, as being like "a harp without a base-chord"

Audience: none specifically named

Performer: Craiphtine, one of the famous harpers of Ireland

Instrument: harp

#### Char.'s of Music:

- 144.1: Comparison made here to St. Columba's death, and the resulting anguish to his community, as being like "a harp without a base-chord"; Craiphtine's harp named.
- 144.2: Craiphtine's harp music described as "sweeter than any music"

#### Effects of Music:

- 144.a: Narrator mentions the power of Craiphtine's harp music to drop "sleep-music" upon the hosts, when he cites the poet Ferchetne's comments about Craiphtine's harp music.

[Number 145]

Title: "Betha Coluimb Cille"  
"Life of St. Columcille"

Manuscript: Bodleian Library MS. V, fasc. I, p. 734, to fo. 60.  
entitled: "O'Donnell's Life of Colum Cille"

Approximate Dating: 1532 A.D.--a 16th c. manuscript.

Old Ir. Text: ... "7 do bi do med an mebruigthe 7 d'airde an gotha co cualatar coimtinol caillech n-dub do bi mile go leith vatha foghar a ghotha; 7 fa bes do a cluinsin an comfhad sin, amail asbert in fili: Son a gotha Colaim cilli mór a binde os gach cler, Go ceann dá céd décc ceimend, aidble remend, eadh ba reil..."

Source: Henebry, R., "The Life of Columbcille", ZCP III, London, 1901, p. 566-7.

[145] Translation: [re: St. Columba as a young boy--he was with his tutor alongside a road; the tutor fell asleep, so Columbcille began to chant his lesson:]

..."And so diligent was the memorizing and so loud the voice that a convent of nuns who where a mile and a half away from him heard the sound of his voice; for it was usual to hear him so far, as the poet said: 'The sound of his voice, Colum Cille's, much its melody beyond every choir, For twelve hundred paces, mighty the courses, was the distance it was audible...'"

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: by his tutor, alongside a road

Audience: nuns in a convent, a mile and a half away

Performer: the young St. Columcille

Instrument: his voice

Char.'s of Music:

145.1: melodious  
145.2: loud

Effect of Music:

145.a: supernaturally "far-reaching"; others heard from a distance

Title: "Betha Coluimb Cille"  
"Life of St. Columcille"

Manuscript: Bodleian Library MS. V, fasc. I, p. 734, to fo. 60.  
entitled: "O'Donnell's Life of Colum Cille"

Approximate Dating: 1532 A.D.--a 16th c. manuscript

Irish Text: ... "Do bi do med na teinedh 7 na lasrach gor fobair di an doiri coille do bvi sa baile do loscad, conderna Columcille an imann-sa danacul an doiri:...Et adeirter inn imon-sa anaghaid gach tenedh 7 gach toirnighe o sin alle, 7 gebe gabhas hi ag luide 7 ag erghe aincid an nonbar is ail les ar theinigh 7 ar toirnigh 7 ar teindtigh..."

Source: Henebry, R., The Life of Columb Cille, ZCP IV,  
London, 1903, p. 292-3.

[146] Translation: [re: Columcille's saving a beloved grove of trees by reciting a holy hymn:]

..."So great was the fire and the flame that it almost burned a grove of trees that was in the place, and Columb Cille made this hymn to protect the grove:...[etc.]...And this hymn is said against every fire and every thunder from that to this, and whosoever recites it on lying down and rising, it will protect any nine he wishes from fire and thunder and lightning..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: near a grove of trees

Audience: St. Columcille

Performer: St. Columcille

Instrument: voice

Char.'s of Music:

146.1: a hymn recited against something evil or dangerous [here, fire], as a type of holy curse, to protect something else.

Effects of Music:

146.a: an entire town was burned, but a grove of trees revered by St. Columcille was protected by a hymn he recited.

146.b: to whosoever would recite this hymn in the future: it would "protect any nine he wishes" from fire, lightning, etc.



[Number 147]

Title: "Betha Coluimb Cille"  
"Life of St. Columcille"

Manuscript: Bodleian Library MS. V, fasc. I, p. 734, to fo. 60.  
entitled: "O'Donnell's Life of Colum Cille"

Approximate Dating: 1532 A.D.--a 16th c. manuscript

Irish Text: ..."7 do foillsighedh flaithes de dó cona gloir 7 cona aibnes 7 cona ilceolaib. 7 do tuit a codlad air lesna ceolaib-sin, 7 mar dob fhada le Colum Cille do bi Mongan na chodlud tocbais a brat da cinn 7 do moscail Mongan iarsin. 7 do fíarfaig Colum Cille de cred hí a bhreth ar an taisbenadh-sin tuccad dó. Ni heidir limsa breth do breith air, ar Mongan, oir dambeith mile cenn orum 7 mile tenga in gach cenn dibh ni thicfed dim an gloir is lugha a bflaithes de dindisin duit..."

Source: Henebry, R., "Life of Colum Cille", ZCP IV, London, 1903, p. 308-9.

[147] Translation: [Mongan, a king, goes to St. Columcille for consultation; he puts his head under the edge of Columcille's cloak, and is shown all the wonders of Heaven:]

..."And there was shown to him the kingdom of God with its glory and its happiness and its many harmonies. And he fell asleep at that music; but as Columb cille thought it long that he slept, he raised his cloak from his head and thereupon Mongan awoke. And Columb cille asked him what he thought of that vision that had been given him. 'I am not able to define it,' said Mongan, 'for if I had a thousand heads, and a thousand tongues in each head of them, I would not be able to tell thee the least glory in the kingdom of God...' "

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: king Mongan hears it in a vision, by a Saint  
Audience: St. Columcille  
Performers: God's celestial Heavenly harmonies [perhaps angels?]  
Instruments: none specifically stated

Char.'s of Music:

147.1: Music in a Heavenly environment of great happiness and joy

Effects of Music:

147.a: king Mongan fell asleep at hearing God's harmonies, in  
his vision

[Number 148]

Title: "Betha Coluimb Cille"  
"Life of St. Columcille"

Manuscript: Bodleian Library MS. V, fasc. I, p. 734, to fo. 60.  
entitled: "O'Donnell's Life of Colum Cille"

Approximate Dating: 1532 A.D.--a 16th c. manuscript

Irish Text:..."Inniss dam anos ar Baithin cindus rachas Patruic ar son fer nErenn allo an brátha. Inneosad ni eicin de ar Colum cille amail toilighes dia damh .i. ticfaidh Patruic go Cluain mac Nois a coinde bfherr nErenn. Is andsin fulairfess se an cloc do buain a Cruachan aigle .i. an bernan Patruic a ainmdo bris se fein remhe ar na deamhnaib ga nindarbad don Cruaich. 7 ticfaid fir 7 mna Erenn fa guth an cluic-sin..."

Source: Henebry, R., "Life of Coluimb cille", ZCP V, London, 1905, p. 36-7.

[148] Translation: [re: Columcille explains to fellow cleric Baithin about how St. Patrick will come for the men and women of Ireland on the Day of Doom:]

..."`Tell me now,' said Baithin, `how shall it fare with Patrick in the day of Doom for sake of the men of Erin?' `I will tell a portion of it,' said Colum cille, `as far as God shall permit me. Patrick will come to Cluain mac Nois to meet the men of Erin. Then he will cause a bell to be rung in Cruachan aigle, to wit, the Bernan of Patrick which he himself formerly broke upon the demons banishing them from the Cruach. And the men and women of Erin shall come at the voice of that bell..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: On Doomsday, at Cruachan aigle  
Audience: men and women of Ireland, St. Patrick, and God  
Performer: God, through St. Patrick  
Instrument: St. Patrick's famous bell, that banishes all demons

Char.'s of Music:

148.1: Supernaturally "far-reaching" bell of St. Patrick summons all in Ireland on Doomsday

Effects of Music:

148.a: Presumably, all the men and women of Ireland will hear the bell of St. Patrick, and be summoned to the monastery of Cluain mac Nois to be saved from Satan and his leagues of demons

[Number 149]

Title: "Betha Coluimb Cille"  
"Life of St. Columcille"

Manuscript: Bodleian Library MS. V, fasc. I, p. 734, to fo. 60.  
entitled: "O'Donnell's Life of Colum Cille"

Approximate Dating: 1532 A.D.--a 16th c. manuscript

Irish Text: ... "Et tuc an taingel cloch cruind glass dó 7 adubairt ris a teilgen risna demhnaib 7 coteithfedis fen 7 an ceo rempe 7 fos adubairt an taingel ris a cloc fen docaitheamh riv mar an cedna .i. an dub duaibsech a ainm. 7 dorinde Columb cille amail do seol an taingel do indus corleicedh an talam uili ris on ceo 7 cortheithetar na diabla remhe ar carraic cloiche do bi sabfhaige moir amuigh ar comair an cind tiar don talumh-sin 7 do caith Columb cille an cloch-sin tuc an taingel do 7 a cloc .i. an dub duaibsec riu..."

Source: Henebry, R., "Life of Coluimb cille", ZCP V, London, 1905, p. 54-5.

[149] Translation: [re: angel teaches St. Columcille to destroy demons:]

.... "And an angel gave him a round grey stone and told him to throw it at the demons and that both they and the fog should flee before it. And he told him to throw his own bell, namely the Dub duaibsech, at them likewise. And Columb cille did as the angel taught him so that the whole land was yielded to it from the fog, and the devils fled before him to a boulder that was out in the ocean abreast of the western headland of that country. And Columb cille cast that stone which the angel had given him and his own bell, to wit, the Dub duaibsech, at them..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: sea side location in west of Ireland

Audience: an angel and St. Columcille

Performer: God, through St. Columcille

Instrument: Saint's bell, named the "Dub duaibsech"

Char.'s of Music:

149.1: Saint's bell itself

Effects of Music:

149.a: St. Columcille's bell used to banish evil spirits, as shown and instructed by an angel

Title: "Betha Coluimb Cille"  
"Life of St. Columcille"

Manuscript: Bodleian Library MS. V, fasc. I, p. 734, to fo. 60.

Approximate Dating: 1532 A.D.--a 16th c. manuscript

Irish Text: ... "Is andsin ro íarr Columb cille ar día a cloc 7 a cloch dó aisec asin fairce dó 7 les sin docondaic se na ndáchair tenedh cuicce íad 7 do benatar ar lár laim ris 7 do beandaigh se an talmain-sin as ar chuir se na hainspirda 7 do fhagaib se termonn aige o shoin alle 7 do fagaib se an cloch-sin mar airdmhin ann ag denum fert 7 mirbuile. Et an ait inar bean an cloc docuaid se go domain a talumh and gor fagaib se a tenga and 7 adubairt Columb cille nar misde an cloc abeith gan tengaidh 7 debe duine do denadh esonóir an termaind-sin an cloc do chur sa pholl inar fhacaib se a tenga mar comartha escaine air 7 nach coimheolad sé a bliadain 7 do derbadh sin co minic..."

Source: Henebry, R., "Life of Coluimb cille", ZCP V, London, 1905, p. 54-55.

[150] Translation: [re: a stone and bell to destroy demons:]

..."Then Columb cille asked God to return his bell and his stone out of the sea. And thereupon he saw them coming towards him as it were a glow of fire, and they fell down beside him. And he blessed that land from which he had banished the evil spirits and bestowed upon it the right of sanctuary from that out. And he left that stone as a principal relic there working wonders and miracles. And where the bell fell, it sank deep into the earth and left its tongue there. And Columb cille said that the bell was as well off without its tongue, and whatsoever person should dishonour that sanctuary, that the bell should be put in the hole in which it left its tongue for a sign of malediction upon him, and that he would not complete his year. And that has been often proved..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: bell's tongue sank deep into the earth

Audience: St. Columcille

Performer: God's will, through St. Columcille

Instrument: his bell

Char.'s of Music:

150.1: Saint's tongue-less bell to supernaturally "sound" a curse/malediction, if disrespected.

Effects of Music:

150.a: If this curse was sounded, the person so named would die within a year; this having been "often proved".

[Number 151]

Title: "Betha Coluimb cille"  
"Life of St. Columcille"

Manuscript: Bodleian Library MS. V, fasc. I, p. 734, to fo. 60.  
entitled: "O'Donnell's Life of Columcille"

Approximate Dating: 1532 A.D.--a 16th c. manuscript

Irish Text:

..."7 fós do beidís drong denlaith parthais ag celiubrad  
gachlai an...7 do benfaidis na cluicc uatha fen an aimser an  
aifrind..."

Source: Henebry, R., "Life of Coluimb cille", ZCP V, London,  
1905, p. 84-7.

[151] Translation: [re: a man named Enne would not give St. Colum-  
cille an island he so desired for his ministry; so, he cursed him,  
by telling him of all of the advantages he could of had:]

..."and besides there would be a company of the birds of Paradise  
singing there every day...and the bells would ring of themselves at  
mass and office time..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: Music as part of Christian Heaven

Audience: All those who would have been on the island

Performers: God---through Heavenly harmonies of birds and bells

Instruments: birds of Paradise, and church/priest's bells

Char.'s of Music:

151.1: Music as part of a Christian Paradise, giving rise to an  
overall atmosphere of great joy and blessings (as the bells  
ring by themselves, and the birds of Paradise sing)

Effects of Music:

151.a: Here, St. Columcille was telling someone what might have  
been, i.e., a "Heavenly", musical, atmosphere on the  
island; but, as the man did not cooperate, he was denied  
these effects instead, and the island became barren.

[Number 152]

Title: "Betha Decclain"  
"Life of St. Declan of Ardmore"

Manuscript: Bibl. Royale MS. Brussels [4190-4200]

Approximate Dating: 16th c. manuscript; St.'s legends earlier.

Irish Text: "do gab Declan da rad aifrinn in ecclair do bi reme ar in rliccid. Agur do cuiread cloc bec dub cuicce do nim tre fuinneog na heccailri artech., Agur do an ar an altoir hi ffiadnure Declain. Agur do gab gairdechur mor Declan aga faicrin agur tucc molad agur gloir do Criort..."

Source: Power, P., Life of St. Declan of Ardmore, Irish Texts Society, London, 1914, p.18.

[152]: Translation:

"Declan was beginning Mass one day in a church which lay in his road, when there was sent him from heaven a little black bell, (which came) in through the window of the church and remained on the altar before Declan. Declan greatly rejoiced thereat and gave thanks and glory to Christ..."

Source: Ibid., p. 19.

Location of Music: little black bell "from heaven" suddenly arrives to assist St. Declan

Audience: St. Declan, clergy present, and parishioners

Performer: Unknown and mysterious; is supernatural in origin.

Instrument: little black bell

Char.'s of Music:

None specifically named.

Effect of Music:

152.a: Sudden, inexplicable arrival of this bell through the window allows St. Declan and clergy to finish Mass. They also give thanks to God for this "musical miracle".

[Number 153]

Title: "Betha Fechin Fabair"  
"Life of St. Fechin of Fore"

Manuscript: Phillips MS. No. 9194, fo. 1a-8b.

Approximate Dating: 1329 A.D.--an early 14th c. manuscript;  
St.'s legends earlier.

Irish Text: ..."Aimsir ann bóí Feichin aga foghlaim og Cruimter Nathí i n-anuch. Curtur lá n-ann do coimét na cluana he arnach lomtai hi o cheitrib echtrann. Curtur iarsin eich 7 indili in rí g innti do aimdeoin Feicin. Mallaigis Feicin iat 7 benus a clog forro gu fuaratur bas achetóir. Intan rocuala in rig sin teid a fiadnuse Feichin 7 legis fora gluinib he, 7 rosir maitim a pecadh dó. Dobeir Feicin absoluid dó, 7 rothodusigh a eich 7 a indili dó; 7 romorad ainm Dé 7 Feichin tresin firt-sin..."

Source: Stokes, W., "Life of St. Fechin of Fore",  
RC 12, Paris, 1891, p. 324-5.

[153] Translation: ..."Of a time when Fechin was learning with Presbyter Naithi in Achad Conairi, he is set one day to keep the meadow lest it should be stript bare by strangers' cattle. Thereafter the king's horses and herds are put into it in spite of Fechin. Fechin cursed them, and struck his bell at them, so that they found death therewith. When the king heard that, he comes before Fechin, and flung himself on his knees, and sought forgiveness of his sins. Fechin gives him absolution, and brought his horses and his herds back to life; and God's name and Fechin's were magnified by that miracle..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: Meadow  
Audience: St. Fechin and the king's horses and herds  
Performer: God, through St. Fechin  
Instrument: St. Fechin's bell

Char.'s of Music:

153.1: Saint's bell used to curse enemies

Effects of Music:

153.a: After St. Fechin struck the bell at the king's horses and herds, they all fell dead.

[Number 154]

Title: "Betha Fursa"  
"Life of Fursa"

Manuscript: Biblio. Royale MS. at Brussels, 2324-40, fo. 50.

Approximate Dating: 16th c. manuscript; St.'s legends earlier.

Irish Text: "...Cidh fil ann tra acht ro cumhdaigh sé an ecclas adubhramur, oculus ro ghabhustar galar mor hé innte ón tsatharn go roile, amal innisess leabhar a bethad fein; oculus ruccadh asa curp hé o fescgur go gairm an choiligh, 7 ro cuala se cantairecht aingel nimhe, oculus atconnairc iátt ina fiadhnise. Oculus issedh so no chandais .i. ibunt sancti de uirtute in uirtutem. .i. raghait na naoimh do nirt for nirt. Oculus is edh fós atbertis .i. uidebitur Deus deorum [in Sion] .i. atcifider Dia na ndía hi Sleibh Sioin."

Source: Stokes, W., "Betha Fursa", RC 25, Paris, 1901, p. 390.

[1154]: Translation: "...when he had built the church we have mentioned, a serious illness attacked him therein from one Saturday to another, as the Book of his own Life relates; and from evening to cockcrow he was taken out of his body, and he heard the chanting of angels of heaven, and he beheld them before him. And this is what they were chanting: 'Ibunt sancti de uirtute in uirtutem' [Psalm 83:8] i.e., 'the saints shall advance from virtue to virtue.' And this [is] also what they were chanting: 'Videbitur Deus deorum in Sion.' [Psalm 83:8], i.e., 'the God of gods will be seen on Mount Zion'..."

Source: Ibid., p. 391.

Location of Music: During St. Fursa's out-of-body experience, where he heard the chanting of angels.

Audience: none specific; is a description of saint's vision

Performer: Choirs of angels of heaven chant Psalms

Instrument: vocal chants and singing of angels

#### Char.'s of Music:

154.1: angelic choirs heard in non-earthly realm, as part of St. Fursa's out-of-body vision to Heaven. They chant Psalm 83:8.

#### Effects of Music:

154.a: St. Fursa, because of this transporting experience involving angelic chants as a central theme, is able to recover much more quickly from his serious illness. [Possible healing effect of music, and God's angels, is implied.]



[Number 155]

Title: "Life of St. Kieran of Saighir"

Manuscript: Egerton 112, pp. 1042. [1780-82 by M. O'Connor]

Approximate Dating: 18th c. manuscript; St.'s legends earlier.

Irish Text: "Do ghabadar chuca a gcruite as an gcrann amhail do thegasc Ciarán dóib agus dorinset ceol toltanach i bfiadnaisi in rig agus Chiarán agus cháich i gcoitchinne. agus do bhí an oired sin do chaenbharraighe isan gceol sin gur chodail sochraid do na sluagaib leis agus tugadh glóire agus moladh do dhia agus do Chiarán."

Source: O'Grady, S.H., Silva Gadelica, London, 1892, p. 7.

[155]: Translation:

[Preceding this incident, St. Kieran has revived eight harpers from the dead, from a loch where they had been dead for one month.]

"Out of the tree they took to them (the harpers) their harps, and in presence of the king, of Kieran, and of all the rest in general, played delicious melody: in which music was delightfulness such that a great number of the multitude fell asleep to it; and glory was given to God and to Kieran."

Source: Ibid., p. 8.

Location of Music: eight harpers revived from dead in a loch; their eight harps were retrieved from a tree.

Audience: King, St. Kieran, and all others present

Performer: Eight harpers, after being revived from the dead

Instrument: harps

Char.'s of Music:

155.1: music played by revived harpers, from the dead

155.2: "delicious melody"

155.3: music of "delightfulness"

Effects of Music:

155.a: a great number of the audience fell asleep

155.b: St. Kieran praised for reviving the eight harpers; glory given to God and St. Kieran.

Title: "Life of St. Kieran"

Manuscript: Egerton 112, pp. 1042. [1780-82 by M. O'Connor]

Approximate Dating: 18th c. manuscript; St.'s legends earlier.

Irish Text: "Adubairt Pátraic re Ciarán: éirig romham i nEirinn is do ghéabair tobar i gcóigcrích an rainn tuaidh agus an rainn tes di ina medhón agus cumhdaig mainistir duit ag an dtobar sin. agus is edh as ainm do uarán. is ann bhias t'onoir agus t'eiséirgidh go bráth. do fhregair Ciarán agus adubairt: aithin damsá an tinad a bfuil an tobar sin. adubairt Patraic ris: biaidh an tigerna maille riot agus gluais romhat go dírech agus gabh mo chluíginse chugat agus biaidh gan labairt go roichir an tobar adubramar. agus mar roichir é laibheoraidh an cluigín do ghuth sholusbhinn agus aichneochair mar sin an tobar...do bhí clog Chiaráin gan labairt nó go dtainic sé chum an ionaid a raibe an tobar adubairt Pátraic .i. uarán. óir ar dtecht do Chiaráin i nEirinn do dhírig dia é chum an tobair sin. agus arna rochtain do do labair an cluigín go luath do ghuth sholusghlan."

Source: O'Grady, S.H., Silva Gadelica, London, 1892, p. 2-3.

[156]: Translation: "Said Patrick to Kieran: 'precede me into Ireland; and in the marching of her northern with her southern part, in her central point, thou shalt find a well. At such well (the name of which is Uaran) build thou a monastery'...Kieran answered and said: 'impart to me the spot where the well is.' Patrick said to him: 'the Lord will be with thee: go thou but straight before thee; take to thee [first] my little bell, which until thou reach the well that we have mentioned shall be speechless; but when thou attainest to it the little bell will with a clear melodious voice speak out...' Kieran's bell was without uttering until he came to the place where was the well of which Patrick spoke...when he had reached, straightway the little bell spoke with a bright, clear voice..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: bell rings at location of well of Uaran

Audience: St. Kieran

Performer: Unknown and mysterious; supernatural in origin.

Instrument: bell given to St. Kieran by St. Patrick

Char.'s of Music:

156.1: little bell rings at well of Uaran in a "clear, melodious voice", a "bright, clear voice", just as St. Patrick had said it would.

Effects of Music:

156.a: its "ring" signalled to St. Kieran that this was the proper place to build a monastery in central Ireland.

Title: "Beatha Lasrach" ["Life of St. Lasair"]

Manuscript: Stowe MS. B IV 1, p. 97b-103a.

Approximate Dating: Written in 1670 [17th c.] by David O'Duigenan, but Saint's legends were earlier.

Irish Text:..."Imtusa Lasrach dobherar ós áird bodhesta douí ag binnghabhail a psalm 7 a psaltrach 7 ag deagmholadh an Duíleamhan ina duirrthech féin. Agus is annsin tangadar lucht na hairgne 7 na hedála dionnsaidhe an aruis ina raibhe Lasair 7 dochuireadar teinidh 7 tennála gacha hairde dhe 7 dolas an tegh ina timcheall 7 došaoileadar cách go coitchionn gur loisgeadh an banoigh ionrac úasal craibhtheach 7 tainic duine dionnsaidhe an tighe 7 aseadh adubhairt. As ard na lasracha atá ag techt tar an mbanoigh...7 is amhlaidh fúaradar í féin ina suidhe go hionnfiar étrom aerda ar colbha a hiomhdhaidhe 7 a hairdleaptha go hiodhan iomlán 7 a leabhar áluinn arsaidh óirlitreach ina fiadhnuisse ar beinn a bruit 7 a bláithédaigh 7 a húidh 7 a haire ar moladh an Duíleamhan go diongmála. Mar dochonncadar cach go coitchionn bennchobar Molaise ar losgadh 7 taisi na náomh 7 na mbannáomh gan díon ósa ccionn 7 na ferta dorónadh aran mbanóigh domóradh ainm Dé 7 Lasrach tridin ngníomh sin..."

Source: Gwynn, L., "Beatha Lasrach", Eriu V, Dublin, 1911, p. 78-9.

[157] Translation: ..."Tidings are given of Lasair now. She had been melodiously chanting her psalms and her psalter, and duly praising the Creator in her own cell, & then came the spoilers and reavers unto the dwelling in which Lasair was, and set fire to every part thereof with torches, and all thought that the pious, innocent and noble virgin had been burnt, and one came unto the house, and spoke thus: 'High are the flames that come above the maiden'...and they found her, seated in a cool light and an airy garment on the side of her couch & high bed, undefiled and unhurt, with her beautiful ancient golden-lettered book before her on the skirt of her mantle and her fair raiment, and her care and attention fixed on meetly praising the Creator. When all in common beheld the tower of [St.] Molaise on fire, & relics of the saints and the holy women without a roof over them, and the wonders worked on the virgin, God's name and Lasair's were glorified by reason of that deed..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: a holy nun's cell

Audience: Lasair, the nun, and others present in the house

Performer: Lasair, singing her psalms

Instrument: her voice

Char.'s of Music:

157.1: her "melodious" chanting of the psalms

Effects of Music:

157.a: protected her completely from a major fire, unlike others.

[Number 158]

Title: "The Vision of Merlino"

Manuscript: Mainly from the MS. by Seon mac Solaidhe at Stackallen, Co. Meath, pgs. 191-216.

Approximate Dating: 1718 A.D.--18th c. manuscript, but the tale has also appeared in other MS. fragments.

Irish Text: "...Agus ein aille eadrochta i mbarr na gcrann sin ag cantain ceoil; agus oirfidhe, luit, orgain, agus instrumhint cheoil na cruinne d'a gcurtaoi d'a gcómhshéinm iad, go madh binne guth agus glór aon ein amháin díobh sin no iad uile..."

Source: Macalister, R.A., "Vision of Merlino", ZCP IV, London, 1903, p. 442-3.

[158] Translation: [re: Merlino's being shown a Christian Paradise by the Spirit of Wisdom:]

..."And beautiful birds were manifest on the tops of those trees, singing songs; and were the viols, lutes, organs, and instruments of music of the world set with them and making harmony with them, sweeter would be the voice and the sound of one single bird than all of these..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: Christian Paradise--birds on tops of trees, in conjunction with various instruments.

Audience: Merlino, a man who is shown a vision of Heaven. He is originally portrayed as a petty thief, who later becomes a major convert. Macalister says that "Merlin's name was well-known in Italy in the Middle Ages, and he is sometimes associated with Vergil", thus implying that this Vision is perhaps a "Celtic" version of Dante. Also, Merlin "appears under the name 'Milino', as a pupil of Vergil's" [see Macalister's Intro., pgs. 394-5]

Performers: God's birds of Paradise, and (celestial?) musicians

Instruments: birds' voices, lutes, organs, violas, and others

Char.'s of Music:

158.1: sweet, beautiful music in Paradise

158.2: narrator seems to feel, however, that "one single bird" would be "sweeter" than all of the other instruments named

Effects of Music:

158.a: Merlino greatly effected by this in his vision

[Number 159]

Title: "The Vision of Merlino"

Manuscript: Mainly from the MS. by Seon mac Solaidhe at Stackallen, Co. Meath, pgs. 191-216.

Approximate Dating: 1718 A.D.--an 18th c. manuscript, although the story is earlier, in some other fragments.

Irish Text: ..."ar Merlino: `agus inis damh cia h-i an áit aoibhinn úd idchim comh gar so do riogacht Iffrin?' `Ní h-amhladh atá,' ar an Spiorad Eolach `is fada ó ríoghacht Iffrin í, ge nach saoilionn tusa e: agus ag so' ar se `Parrthas Neimhe, `áit iona bhfuil lucht dheanta thola Dé, in aoibhnios suathain...Agus na h-ein do chualadh tú ag cantain cheóil, eadhon, Aingle Neimhe iad sin atá de ghnáth ag cantain cheóil agus ag moladh Dé..."

Source: Macalister, R.A., "The Vision of Merlino", ZCP IV, London, 1903, p. 444-5.

[159] Translation: [re: Merlino shown Paradise by an angel called the Spirit of Wisdom, who explains to him what he saw:]

..."said Merlino: `Tell me, what is that pleasant place yonder that I see, so near the kingdom of Hell?' `Not so', said the Spirit of Wisdom, `far is it from the Kingdom of Hell, though thou thinkest it not. This,' said he, `is the Paradise of Heaven, the place where those who do the will of God are in eternal pleasure...The birds thou heardest singing melody are the Angels of Heaven, who are ever singing melody and praising God..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: Christian Heaven

Audience: the man Merlino--began as a petty thief, before his vision, and ended up an enthusiastic convert to Christianity.

Performers: God's angels/birds of Paradise

Instruments: their voices/singing of melodies

Char.'s of Music:

159.1: pleasant singing and melody in Heaven

Effects of Music:

159.a: the birds'/angels of Heaven and their singing is portrayed as a major part of Heaven, and [later] greatly impresses Merlino as an important part of his vision of Heaven--he becomes a major Christian convert.

[Number 160]

Title: "The Vision of Merlino"

Manuscript: Mainly from the MS. by Seon mac Solaidhe at Stackallen, Co. Meath, p. 191-216.

Approximate Dating: 1718 A.D.--an 18th c. manuscript, but the story is earlier, preserved in fragments.

Irish Text: ..."Eirigh, a Merlino' ar se, `d'eisd Dia re d'urnaighthe...Is annsin d'eirigh Merlino amhail d'aithnigh an Spiorad Eolach dhó, agus do bhi ó sin amach ar feadh a bheatha 'na bhuabhall bhinnghlorach, ag teagasg agus ag tarraing na gcriosduidhe dochum De Uile-chumhachtach: go bhfuair bas naomhtha beannaighthe, ag tabhairt glóire agus siorbhuidheachas do 'n Athair, do 'n Mac agus do 'n Spiorad Naomh. Amen. Finit."

Source: Macalister, R.A., "The Vision of Merlino", ZCP IV, London, 1903, p. 448-9.

[160] Translation: [The following occurs after Merlino's dramatic conversion to Christianity, from a life of thievery, murder, and lying, after experiencing his Vision:]

..."Rise, Merlino,' said he: `God has heard thy prayer'...Then Merlino rose as the Spirit of Wisdom commanded, and from that out throughout his life his was a melodious trumpet-voice, teaching and drawing the Christians to God the Almighty: till he died a holy blessed death, giving glory and long thanksgiving to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen. Finit."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: In a room with the Spirit of Wisdom

Audience: the Spirit of Wisdom and God

Performer: God; an allusion to his converted voice being musical

Instrument: Merlino's voice

Char.'s of Music:

160.1: melodious

Effects of Music:

160.a: a converted man's voice described as a "melodious trumpet-voice", to teach others

[Number 161]

Title: "Life of St. Mochuda"

Manuscript: R.I.A. M. 23 50 [transcribed: 1740-50 by John Murphy]

Approximate Dating: 18th c. manuscript; St.'s legends earlier.

Irish Text: ... "Adubairt Mocuda: 'A tígearna,' ar ré, 'ar uimi doanar--grád tugar don leigean diada do cuala ag an earbog 7 agá cléireacaib agá cana, 7 ní cuala riam níd buí binne liom ná é, 7 do badarrad agá rád ar fud na rlige riompa, nó go rangadar an teag 7 ann rin ré, dul do codla dóib, 7 do bí fóir an tearbog ina sonar abfad don oidce ag rád an léiginn rin tar éir cáic, 7 do buí fearr leamra, a tígearna, go mbeinn féin ag fogluim..."

Source: Power, P., Life of St. Mochuda, Irish Texts Society, London, 1914, p. 80.

[161]: Translation: [king is worried at the young boy Mochuda's absence, and questions him as to why he has been gone so long:]

..."Mochuda replied, "Sir, this is why I have stayed away--through attraction of the holy chant of the bishop and clergy; I have never heard anything so beautiful as this; the clerics sang as they went along the whole way before me; they sang until they arrived at their house, and thenceforth they sang till they went to sleep. The bishop however remained by himself far into the night praying by himself when the others had retired. And I wish, O king, that I might learn [their psalms and ritual]..."

Source: Ibid., p. 81.

Location of Music: clerics on road, on way to their house

Audience: St. Mochuda, as a young boy

Performer: clergy

Instrument: Vocal singing/clerical chanting

Char.'s of Music:

161.1: St. Mochuda says he has "never heard anything so beautiful"

Effects of Music:

161.a: A possible implication here, that the clerics may have sung themselves to sleep; i.e., after awhile, the hypnotic effect(s) of singing for hours, affected them accordingly.

161.b: the power of the music (clerics' chanting) inspires a young boy to enter the priesthood; he later becomes a saint.

[Number 162]

Title: "Life of St. Moling"

Manuscript: Brussels MS. 4190-4200, ff. 43a-65b.

Approximate Dating: 16th c. manuscript; St.'s legends earlier.

Irish Text:

..."`Mo chuil,'...`Cidh fil ann tra ar Molling acht intí ro mill  
immum in estrecht truagh no bidh ic airfitiudh damh..."

Source: Stokes, W., The Birth and Life of St. Moling, London,  
1907, p. 56.

[162]: Translation: [St. Moling comments on the sad loss of his  
pet fly:]

"`Howbeit', says Moling, `but he that marred for me the poor pet  
that used to be making music for me...'"

Source: Ibid., p. 57.

Location of Music: pet fly in the vicinity of St. Moling

Audience: St. Moling

Performer: fly, as a beloved pet "musician"

Instrument: its "buzzing" is inferred

Char.'s of Music:

162.1: a fly's buzzing sounds described as musical by St. Moling

Effects of Music:

162.a: the fly's death saddens St. Moling, who seems to have  
cherished his "poor pet" who "made music" for him.



Title: "Betha Patraic"  
"Life of St. Patrick"

Manuscript: Book of Lismore, fo. 1a 1.

Approximate Dating: 15th c. manuscript; St.'s legends earlier.

Irish Text:

"Eisseirgi Patraic a nDun,  
a ordan a n-Ard Macha,  
i telchan Chaisil Cheolaig  
rodheonaig trian a ratha."

Source: Stokes, W., Lives of Saints from the Book of Lismore,  
Oxford, 1890, p. 14.

[163]: Translation:

"Patrick's resgurrection in Down,  
His primacy in Armagh,  
On the hillock of musical Cashel,  
He granted a third of his grace."

Source: Ibid., p. 162.

Location of Music: Cashel

Audience: not specifically stated

Performer: St. Patrick blesses Munster, from "musical" Cashel

Instrument: none specifically stated

Char.'s of Music:

163.1: hill of Cashel believed to be a musical area, whereupon St.  
Patrick granted a third of his grace to Munster.

Effects of Music:

none specific.

[Number 164]

Title: "Tripartite Life of Patrick"

Manuscript: Rawl. B 512, fo. 5a1-30a.

Approximate Dating: late 14th-early 15th c. manuscript

Irish Text: ..."Ocus isand, dano, doratad fairsom intainm is Patricius .i. ainm cumachtai la Rómanchu .i. fer fuaslaicthea gial. Isé seom, dano, forúaslaicc gialnad ocus moxaine nanGóidel do Demon. Ocus intan rombóth icairlégunn inangrád musfriécartar natri classa .i. clas múintiri nime, ocus clas inna Rómanach ocus clas namac ó chaillid Fóchlad. Ised rochan huile: 'Heuernenses omnes [rogamus te S. Patrici, ut venias et ambules inter nos, et liberares nos']..."

Source: Stokes, W., The Tripartite Life of Patrick, London, 1887, p. 32-3.

[164] Translation: [re: the day St. Patrick was ordained:]

..."Then, too, was the name 'Patricius' given unto him, a name of power as the Romans think, to wit, one who looseth hostages. He, then, loosed the hostageship and slavery of the Gael to the Devil. And when the orders were a-reading out, the three choirs mutually responded, namely, the choir of the household of Heaven, and the choir of the Romans, and the choir of the children from the wood of Fochlad. This is what they all sang: 'All we Irish beseech thee, holy Patrick, to come and walk among us and to free us'..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: St. Patrick's ordination in Rome

Audience: God and all present, plus three choirs

Performers: Three Choirs--of Heaven, of the Romans, and of the choir of the wood of Fochlad

Instrument: their voices

Char.'s of Music:

164.1: three choirs "respond" to Patrick's ordination of their own accord, inspired by God

Effects of Music:

164.a: makes St. Patrick's ordination seem unique

164.b: They sang, representing the Irish, to "beseech" Patrick to come to Ireland and free them from the Devil

Title: "Tripartite Life of Patrick"

Manuscript: Rawl. B 512, fo. 5a1-30a

Approximate Dating: late 14th-early 15th c. manuscript

Irish Text: ... "Hiforciund tra in .xl. laithi sin ocus in .xl. aidchi rolinad fair inslíab diénlaithib dubaib conná congain nem nátalmain. Gabais salmu escaine foraib. Ní lotar úad airi. Doforbartt fergg iarum fríu. Benaíd achlocc foraib cocualatar fir Erenn aguth ocus foiceirt forru commeбайд ass abernn, conide sin Bernán Brigte. Cíid iarum Patraic comba fliuch aagaid ocus achassal arabelaib. Ní tainic demon tír Erenn iarsin cocend secht mbliadan ocus secht mís ocus secht lá ocus secht naidchi. Luid intangel iarum do chomdídnad Patraic ocus glanais incasail, ocus dobert énlaithi gela immón Cruachán ocus nocantais ceula bindi dó..."

Source: Stokes, W., The Tripartite Life of Patrick, London, 1887, p. 114-5.

[165] Translation: [re: Patrick, like Moses, goes for forty days and forty nights upon a mountain:]

..."Now at the end of those forty days and forty nights the mountain was filled with black birds, so that he knew not Heaven nor earth. He sang maledictive psalms at them. They left him not because of this. Then his anger grew against them. He strikes his bell at them, so that the men of Ireland heard its voice, and he flung it at them, so that its gap broke out of it, and that bell is 'Brigit's Gapling'. Then Patrick weeps till his face and his chasuble in front of him were wet. No demon came to the land of Erin after that till the end of seven years and seven months and seven days and seven nights. Then the angel went to console Patrick, and cleansed the chasuble, and brought white birds around the Cruachan, and they used to sing sweet melodies for him..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: site of Cruachan, an ancient druidic site

Audience: St. Patrick, God, demons, angels

Performers: God, through St. Patrick; and the Devil, through demons

Instruments: Saint's bell, Saint's voice, white birds

Char.'s of Music:

165.1: maledictive psalms sung by Patrick at black bird demons

165.2: Patrick's bell "strikes itself" supernaturally at the black bird demons, and all the men in Ireland hear it;

165.3: sweet melodies sung by God's white birds for Patrick

Effects of Music:

165.a: His bell drove out the black bird demons sent by Satan

165.b: God's white birds, with their sweet songs, comfort him

[Number 166]

Title: "Tripartite Life of Patrick"

Manuscript: Rawl. B 512, fo. 5a1-30a

Approximate Dating: late 14th-early 15th c. manuscript

Irish Text: ..." `Infail innaill atchota dam?' ol Patraic. `Fail,' olintaingel, `nách óen gébas do immum huan tráth co araili, níba péne na réigi.' `Isfota intimmun ocus isdoraíd,' ol Patraic. `Nachóen gébas,' olintangel, `ota Christus illum co dead, ocus náchoen dobera ní itanmair, ocus nachoen donnair aithrigi inEirinn, ní ría aainim Ifern'..."

Source: Stokes, W., The Tripartite Life of Patrick, London, 1887, p. 118-9.

[166] Translation: [re: conversation of St. Patrick with angel:]

..." `Is there aught else He granteth to me?' saith Patrick `There is,' saith the angel: `every one who shall sing thy hymn, from one watch to the other, shall not have pain or torture.' `The hymn is long and difficult,' saith Patrick. `Every one who shall sing it from `Christus illum' to the end, and every one who shall give aught in thy name, and every one who shall perform penitence in Ireland, his soul shall not go to Hell'..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: none specific; is alluded to in a conversation

Audience: St. Patrick talks with an angel

Performer: none specifically stated

Instrument: voices, if one were to sing the hymn referred to.

Char.'s of Music:

166.1: a "long and difficult" hymn, mentioned by St. Patrick

Effects of Music:

166.a: If one were to sing this hymn, as instructed, then one would not go to Hell, and would avoid terrible pain and torture. Theme of a hymn as serving a protective function.

166.b: Concept of a Saint being given--by God through an angel as a messenger--a certain hymn to protect the devout.

[Number 167]

Title: "Tripartite Life of Patrick"

Manuscript: Rawl. B 512, fo. 5a1-30a.

Approximate Dating: late 14th--early 15th c. manuscript

Irish Text:

... "Luith Patraic iarum combóí oc Achud Fobair, ocus dorigne orddu na cásc and. Atát tra cométaidi domuntir Patraic indErind inambethaid béuss. Atá fer húad hiCrúachan Aigli: roclunetar guth achluic ocus nifogabar..."

Source: Stokes, W., The Tripartite Life of Patrick, London, 1887, p. 120-1.

[167] Translation: [re: to a "keeper" of Patrick's household, one of those legendary Irish people who helped Patrick, and remain alive until Doomsday, and never age:]

... "Then Patrick went till he was bidding at Achad Fobair, and there he celebrated Easter. There are, moreover, keepers belonging to Patrick's household alive in Ireland still. There is a man from him in Cruachan Aigle--they hear the voice of his bell and he is not found..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: not specifically stated, although the particular man in question, a "keeper" of Patrick, is from the area of Cruachan Aigle, where St. Patrick once performed a miracle.

Audience: Those in and around Cruachan Aigle

Performer: Supernatural, through the Bell of St. Patrick--which made legendary fame by banishing all demons from Cruachan. Now, through one of his "keepers", his Bell still sounds, yet no one is there, according to this particular reference.

Instrument: St. Patrick's Bell

Char.'s of Music:

167.1: supernatural "sounding" of St. Patrick's bell at Cruachan

Effects of Music:

167.a: Awe and wonderment of those who hear this mysterious musical bell of St. Patrick--long after his death on this earth.

Title: "Tripartite Life of Patrick"

Manuscript: Rawl. B 512, fo. 5a1-30a

Approximate Dating: late 14th-early 15th c. manuscript

Irish Text: ..."Ambóí Conull fri less anechtair, rochúala guth cluic Patraic otiprai Patraic ocondún. Téit Conall chuccai. Bennachais do. 'Aclerig,' ol sé, 'infetarsa ced belrai inso fil iforaithmet lemmsa, 'Hibernenses omnes clamant ad te pueri,' et reliqua. rogabsat dí ingin abroind amathar in nostris regionibus dicentes.' 'Meisi dorograd sin,' ol Patraic, 'ocus rochualasa intan robá ininnsib mara Toirren. Et nesciui utrum in mé, an extra [me] locuta sunt uerba. Et íbo tecum in regionem tuam babtizare, docére, euangel[i]zare.'..."

Source: Stokes, W., The Tripartite Life of Patrick, London, 1887, p. 128-9.

[168] Translation: [King Oengus would not let Conall, a converted Christian and friend of Patrick's into Tara, the pagan center of kingship. He then goes to Patrick for consultation:]

..."While Conall was outside the court he heard the voice of Patrick's bell from Patrick's well by the fortress. Conall comes to him. Patrick blessed him. 'O, cleric,' saith he, 'knowest thou what language is this, that is in my memory--All the Irish children cry unto thee; which two girls sang out of their mother's womb in our territories?' 'It is I who called thus,' saith Patrick. 'And I heard it when I was biding in the isles of the Tyrrhene sea. And I knew not whether the words were spoken within me or outside me. And I will go with thee into thy country, to baptize, to instruct, and to preach the gospel.'..."

Source: Ibid.

Location: the outer courtyard of Tara; and mother's wombs

Audience: Conall, at Tara; and, two mothers-to-be

Performers: God, through St. Patrick at Tara; and, "singing" fetuses, later found out to be the voice of Patrick

Instruments: St. Patrick's Bell; and, the voices of two girls

Char.'s of Music:

168.1: bell associated with a Saint, in pagan king's courtyard

168.2: "singing" of two little girls, while still in the wombs

Effects of Music:

168.a: St. Patrick's bell "summons" Conall to come to Patrick; he then blesses him, listens to his troubles, and helps him.

168.b: two little girls "sing" out from their mothers' wombs; later, Patrick admits this was really his voice from a distance.

[Number 169]

Title: "Tripartite Life of Patrick"

Manuscript: Rawl. B 512, fo. 5a1-30a

Approximate Dating: late 14th-early 15th c. manuscript

Irish Text:

... "Sreid Patraic achlucene fomune ndluith and. Ássaid beithi triadoirnnin. Ishé fo-núair Dicuill. Bethechan cloc Patraic, cluccene becc íairnd qui est isindErnaidi Dicollo..."

Source: Stokes, W., The Tripartite Life of Patrick, London, 1887, p. 248-9.

[169] Translation:

... "Patrick flings his handbell under a thick brake there. A birch (bethe) grows through its handle. It is this that Dicuill found, the Bethechan, Patrick's bell, a little bell of iron, which is now in the Oratory of Dicuill..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: bushes

Audience: God and St. Patrick

Performer: God, through St. Patrick

Instrument: his bell

Char.'s of Music:

169.1: none specifically stated--refers to a musical instrument, St. Patrick's "little bell of iron"

Effects of Music:

169.a: A birch tree grows from St. Patrick's bell handle

169.b: As a result of this miracle, the finder, Dicuill, feels that it is a religious relic, and keeps it for posterity.

[Number 170]

Title: "Tripartite Life of Patrick"

Manuscript: Rawl. B 512, fo. 5a1-30a.

Approximate Dating: late 14th-early 15th c. manuscript

Irish Text:

..."Lau etrebrad firt Patraic inso:.... No gobaind oc denam na clocc .i., Macc-cecht ocus Cuana ocus Macc-tail..."

Source: Stokes, W., The Tripartite Life of Patrick, London, 1887, p. 250-1.

[170] Translation:

..."A little catalogue (?) of Patrick's miracles, thus:...the smiths making the bells, namely, Macc-cecht and Cuana and Macc-tail..."

Ibid.

Location of Music: smiths' workshop

Audience: none specifically stated.

Performer: none specifically stated.

Instruments: bells of St. Patrick, here listed as "miracles"

Char.'s of Music:

170.1: Saint's bells themselves considered worthy of listing alongside his many other miracles

Effects of Music:

170.a: status of music and/or Saint's and cleric's bells is considered to be very high--in fact, here, it is considered to be of "miraculous" calibre

170.b: Also, the status of the smiths who make the bells is considered to be high--even though they make other metal items, bells are specified here.



[Number 171]

Title: "Tripartite Life of Patrick"

Manuscript: Rawl. B 512, fo. 5a1-30a

Approximate Dating: late 14th-early 15th c. manuscript

Irish Text: ..."Ocus fri re da aidhchi deacc .i. anairet robatar sruithi hErend occóare conimmaib ocus salmaib ocus canntaicib, nocho raibi adaig hiMaig Inis acht soillsi aingelacda and...Isin cétna aidchi aingil inCoimded nandúlai robatar icfrithairi choirp Patraic cocetlaib spírtaltaib. Ocus bolod indraith diada tánic dinchurp noeb ocus ceol nanangel dorat súan ocus failti donasruithib fer nErend batar icairi inchoirp isnahaidhib iarum..."

Source: Stokes, W., The Tripartite Life of Patrick, London, 1887, p. 254-5.

[171] Translation: [In reference to the time immediately after the death and subsequent burial of St. Patrick:]

..."And for the space of twelve nights, to wit, the time during which the elders of Ireland were watching him with hymns and psalms and canticles, there was no night in Mag Inis, but an angelic radiance therein...On the first night the angels of the Lord of the elements were watching Patrick's body with spiritual songs. The odour of divine grace which came from the holy body, and the music of the angels, brought sleep and joy to the elders of the men of Ireland who were watching the body in the nights afterwards..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: grave of St. Patrick after his burial

Audience: those watching the gravesite

Performers: angels of the Lord

Instruments: their voices/singing

Char.'s of Music:

171.1: joyful and sweet music of angels, over his body

171.2: concept of certain spiritual songs being used to "watch over" the body after one's burial

Effects of Music:

171.a: the men of Ireland who were watching the site, fell asleep to the music of the angelic hosts

171.b: this music also "brought joy" to the men of Ireland

[Number 172]

Title: "Tripartite Life of Patrick"

Manuscript: Rawl. B 512, fo. 5a1-30a

Approximate Dating: late 14th-early 15th c. manuscript

Irish Text: ... "Post ig[itur] fundatas ecclesias, post monasteria consecrata, post homines baptizatos, post fidem [per totam patriam praedicatam], post tantum patientiam et tantum laborem, post euangelice gratie largitionem, post idola destructa, carminibus et sectis gentilitatis e[ua]c[ua]tis, post magicas artes superates... migravit ad Dominum, et in pace dormiuit, et inter choros angelorum congaudet praesentia Domini sui, merendo [illum] uidere..."

Source: Stokes, W., The Tripartite Life of Patrick, London, 1887, p. 262-3.

[172] Translation:

..."So after founding churches, after consecrating monasteries, after baptising human beings, after preaching the faith throughout the whole country, after so much patience and labour, after bestowing the grace of the Gospel, after destroying idols, the spells and practices of heathenism being made void: after the wizards' arts had been overcome... he departed to the Lord and slept in peace. And among the choirs of angels he rejoiceth with them in his Lord's presence, deserving to behold Him..."

Source: Ibid.

Location of Music: Christian Heaven

Audience: God, all the Saints, angels, and St. Patrick

Performers: God's angels and celestial choirs

Instruments: their voices/singing

Char.'s of Music:

172.1: Music of joy, the choirs of angels in Heaven, with St. Patrick, after his death on this earth

Effects of Music;

172.a: St. Patrick rejoices with them continually; a musical atmosphere in Christian Heaven portrayed.

[Number 173]

Title: "Saltair na Rann"

Manuscript: Rawl. 502, fo. 20b1

Approximate Dating: 12th c. manuscript

Irish Text: ... "Ri bili bethad foablath slige frisrethad soergrád, abarr, abroenrad cechleith roleth darroemag richid. Forsasaid indenlaith an, congaib glerath cheol comlan, cenaurchra, corogud rath, dothorud no duilerad. Alaind indenlaith cotngaeib, cechen glermaith cet n-etteib, canait cenbet, cogleor gle, cet ceol cacha oenheitte..."

Source: Stokes, W., Saltair na Rann, Oxford, 1883, p. 9-10.

[173]: Translation:

[In reference to the Tree of Life and Music:]

"...King of the Tree of Life with its flowers, the space around which noble hosts were ranged, its crest and its showers on every side spread over the fields and plains of Heaven. On it sits a glorious flock of birds and sings perfect songs of purest grace; without withering, with choice bounty of fruit and leaves. Lovely is the flock of birds which keeps it, on every bright and goodly bird an hundred feathers; and without sin, with pure brilliance, they sing a hundred tunes for every feather..."

Source: Jackson, K.H., A Celtic Miscellany, London, 1971, p.295-6.

Location of Music: Christian Heaven, with its Tree of Life

Audience: none specifically stated

Performer: birds of Heaven

Instrument: their songs

Char.'s of Music:

173.1: Music in Christian Heaven, by birds' singing: described as "perfect songs of purest grace", "with pure brilliance" these birds on the Tree of Life "sing a hundred tunes for every feather..."

Effects of Music:

173.a: Birds' songs create an even more joyful atmosphere in Christian Heaven